

AUGUST 21, 1943

# AMERICA

## PRINCIPLES AT STAKE IN ITALY

JOHN LaFARGE

## GLOBAL TONGUE

GABRIEL N. PAUSBACK

## "GRIM REAPERS"

BENJAMIN L. MASSE

## MEDICAL NEEDS AND SERVICES

W. EUGENE SHIELS

## JUDGMENT ON LABOR UNIONS

WILLIAM J. SMITH

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COMMENT ON  
THE WEEK

WASHINGTON  
FRONT

THE NATION  
AT WAR

EDITORIAL  
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BOOKS AND  
FILMS

POETRY AND  
LETTERS

≡

## A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

VOLUME LXIX

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## IN APPRECIATION

With gratitude, we acknowledge the responses received in reply to our request for the names of those who have been listed among the earliest and the latest subscribers to *America*. It is a privilege to place the following on the record of

### OUR HONOR ROLL

"In response to your recent appeal for the names of the early subscribers to *America* I wish to inform you that I subscribed to the Jesuit periodical *The Messenger* about 1890. When that magazine ceased to be published in 1909, my subscription was transferred to *America*. I have been a subscriber ever since."

CATHARINE V. ALLEN Washington 11, D. C.

"Your letter addressed to my father, Thomas J. Deely, has been received. I am sorry to have to tell you that he died on April 28. He was 86 years of age, undoubtedly your oldest and probably one of your longest subscribers. We are very grateful to God that, in spite of advancing years, he kept his fine mind and generous enthusiasms till the very day he died."

JULIA DEELY New York, N. Y.

"This is to inform you that I have been a subscriber to *America* since its beginning, without interruption. I have enjoyed the articles and editorials, and find them in most cases very unbiased."

CHARLES J. BOUCHET Baltimore, Md.

"My husband is, I believe, one of the original family of *America*. His uncle, the late Rev. Francis T. McCarthy, S.J., introduced him to *America*, at the time of a family wedding, January 26, 1910, at which he officiated, and the first subscription dates from February, 1910.

"Our very cordial wishes for a long life to the best Weekly on the market. We would hate to be without it."

Mrs. F. W. MCCARTHY Pittsburgh, Pa.

## IN EXPECTANCY

During the coming months of 1943 and 1944, we are confidently hoping that the increase of new and renewing subscribers to *America* will be greater than in any corresponding period during the past thirty-four years of *America* history.

You who now take *America* can be of inestimable help in achieving this result. We would ask that you send us the names and the addresses of those whom you judge to be the *America* type of readers, those who would profit by the weekly evaluation of the news from the viewpoint of the cultured and progressive Catholic.

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# AMERICA

## A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

AUGUST 21, 1943

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## WHO'S WHO

JOHN LA FARGE, in view of the rumored danger of Communist influence in a collapsed Italy, analyzes the possibilities of that danger; and re-emphasizes the directive principles of the Holy Father as an outline of the only possible bases for a humane world order. . . . WILLIAM J. SMITH, Director of the Crown Heights (Brooklyn) School of Catholic Workmen, is inspired by a recent exchange of correspondence in *AMERICA* re employer-employee rights and duties to put in a few well-considered conclusions of his own. Father Smith will follow his present criticism of labor with a criticism of management, thus making sure of enemies on both sides. . . . VERY REVEREND GABRIEL N. PAUSBACK, O. Carm., associate of the Pan-American Interlanguage Association, is working actively to promote the use of Esperanto. Father Pausback was born in St. Louis, educated in American schools and in Rome; and is now American Assistant General of the Order of Carmelites. . . . W. EUGENE SHIELS weighs the arguments pro and con in the controversy over the adoption of programs of socialized medicine—long advocated and made timely by the current shortage of doctors and the exigencies of war. . . . COMMANDER JAMES H. FLATLEY, author of the letter to the "Grim Reapers" commented on by BENJAMIN L. MASSE, attended Saint John's Parochial School at Green Bay, Wis., and prepared for Annapolis at Saint Norbert's High School, West Depere, Wis. . . . LAURA BENET, a relative of Steven Vincent, is true to the family tradition, being a poet in her own name. She and CYRIL CLEMENS, a relative of the immortal Samuel Clemens, alias Mark Twain, both join in a tribute to the late Stephen Vincent Benét. . . . THE POETS: Francis Sweeney and Thomas Butler, both of the Bay State, and Joseph Dever, in the armed forces.

# COMMENT ON THE WEEK

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**Sixth Meeting.** The great difference, apart from the motives that actuated them, between the meetings of Hitler-Mussolini and of Roosevelt-Churchill, is that the Axis conferences began in blazing pride and have continued under increasing unease and desperation; the Allied consultations began when skies were dark and are continuing with the dawn of victory growing brighter. The last meeting of the Axis chiefs resulted in the deposition of the Duce; this latest meeting of the Prime Minister and the President may result in putting Italy out of the war and even swinging her to active support of our side. One thing is sure: this Canadian round-table has been necessitated by the fact that events are moving ahead of schedule; military success is outrunning political strategy. It is a heartening portent that the United Nations leaders see the danger of having a peace dumped into their laps before they know what they are to do with it. Military decisions will be reached at Quebec, we may be sure; it is to be hoped they will be as brilliantly conceived and executed as were those concerning Tunisia and Sicily. A third front may spring, full panoplied, from the military mind. Still more desirable, if only to keep pace with our successes in the field, would be a joint statement looking toward Allied collaboration for the period of reconstruction and beyond. We anticipate, with prayerful hope, some such truly statesmanlike speeding, not only of the military front, but of the peace front as well.

**Conspicuous Absence?** Is Russia still a stepchild among the United Nations? Is she still suspicious and out to settle the peace in her own way, regardless of the interests of the rest of the world? The absence of Premier Stalin from this sixth Allied war conference will undoubtedly give rise to another crop of such surmises. There is no way of telling, of course, whether they are true, save that we do know, from the explicit statements of the Prime Minister and the President, that Stalin would be more than welcome. Before we jump to a conclusion, let us be careful to estimate Stalin's delicate position. He is not at war with Japan; the Nazis have been urging Japan to relieve them by attacking Russia; the official attendance of Russia at the conferences in Canada might well be the pretext, under color of its being an unfriendly act, that Japan is waiting for. Russia dreads, no less than Germany, the necessity of fighting on two fronts. It may be said, then, that the Soviet has some reason for not joining in at Quebec. She will have no reason at all, though, for not ratifying the decisions there made, particularly those that touch on internationalism and the peace. She has more than won an equal place as a fighting ally; but, as Charles Lucey suggests in this week's

"Washington Front," it is high time that she drop her role of prima donna and behave also as a political ally.

**Query from Russia.** With regard to Italy, in particular, just what is Russia's attitude toward our declared policy of unconditional surrender? The underlying question is acutely put, apropos of the ill-starred OWI broadcast, by an anonymous letter-writer in the August 12 *New York Times*. If we "talk officially as if nothing important had happened; if we continue to treat the succeeding Government precisely like the Government it deposed, what must be the inevitable effect of this example in other satellite countries or in Germany itself? . . . What incentive is there to the nation itself to make any change?" Russia has gone more or less on record as being willing to discuss some sort of peace terms with Germany, in the name of "Free Germany." The terms are completely unacceptable to the Nazis, as things are now constituted; they are predicated on strictly Soviet lines; nevertheless, they are not wholly unconditional. Russia is rarely unwilling to negotiate, as far as other countries are concerned, in the hope of getting a peaceful entrée and espousing those groups or parties in another country which may prove favorable to the Soviet cause. Since surmises are in order, it is not out of order to guess that Mr. Churchill and the President are not leaving out of calculation the question how firmly or how consistently can the Allies stand upon the ground they so effectively took before the fall of the Fascist Government, now that the Russian hints have been dropped.

**Relief and Rehabilitation.** Some questions so closely affect human welfare that they ought to be taken out of politics and made the subject of non-partisan action. This is possible, of course, only when the program sponsored by the administration in power is so reasonable that honorable men in the opposition party can easily assent to it. Accordingly, all those who realize what hunger and disease are doing today to the people of Occupied Europe, and elsewhere in the world, will welcome the policy outlined by Herbert H. Lehman, director of the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations, in an article in the August *Survey Graphic*. Surely, this is one of those questions which are too sacred for political log-rolling. Briefly, Mr. Lehman proposes that countries able to bear part of the costs of relief do so; that relief which cannot be paid for be given outright rather than loaned; that a rehabilitation program be adopted which will shorten the period of relief by re-establishing as quickly as possible the normal economic life of these shattered countries. "Our objective," he explained, "is to help people to help themselves and



thereby to help ourselves, by making possible a world in which the four freedoms can have a chance of realization." While this program is practical and realistic, it is colored, too, by that spirit of charity which Christ illustrated in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Democrats and Republicans can easily unite on it.

**Federal Ghost Towns.** We took a good look last week at one of the less favored Federal housing projects for defense workers that is already beginning to run down. Located on the edge of a fair-sized New England city, it was frankly intended, according to reports, to last but a few years. Whatever was the intent, the reality has already begun to show itself. The rows of frame houses had already lost their moderately neat appearance. If so now, what five or ten years hence? How many of these Federal ghost towns will we find around the country? Plans should not wait for the future, but should begin now to meet this need, according to a report recently issued by the National Committee on the Housing Emergency. The two bodies most concerned, the Federal Government and the community in which the housing project is located, should meet and determine the course to be pursued. A branch of the National Housing Agency might be especially authorized and set up for this work only, with official representation from the community provided for. Remembering the very much smaller number of such abandoned projects which remained after the first World War, and the trouble they then caused, we should take some action, whether on this line or another.

**New Colored Missions.** Clergy of different religious communities have for the very greater part borne the honorable burden of mission work among the colored people in the rural South. In all probability they will continue to bear the greatest share. Nevertheless, the Negro apostolate is too vast a field to be taken care of by the Religious alone, even where all combine in the task. New recruits among the diocesan clergy are a welcome addition to these scattered forces, and even poor priests under a Bishop all too scantily provided with the necessary resources can accomplish wonders. Latest in this field are the Maryall Negro Missions, established in the Mobile Diocese by the Most Rev. Thomas J. Toolen, Bishop of Mobile, and conducted by priests of the Diocese under the direction of the Rev. John J. Raleigh, of Pensacola, Fla. Missions have been opened at Panama City and Warrington in Northwestern Florida.

**Jefferson's Political Philosophy.** The *American Historical Review* for July, in connection with the Jefferson Bi-Centenary, carries a very illuminating article by Carl Becker, "What Is Still Living in the Political Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson?" Professor Becker quotes John Adams as belittling Jefferson's originality in drafting the Declaration of Independence: "There is not an idea in it that was not hackneyed in Congress two years ago." To this Jefferson replied that it was not his purpose "to

say things which had never been said before, but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject." The Declaration, in other words, must be interpreted against the background of the political philosophy common to all the signers, not that peculiar to Jefferson. One of Jefferson's peculiarities, as Professor Becker carefully points out, was an excessive fear and dread of governmental intervention in the affairs of men. His conception of the function of government was faulty. He believed, with some wisdom, that "citizens in the mass are to be trusted but that citizens elected to office need to be carefully watched." Becker concludes that some of Jefferson's fundamental principles are still valid, but that others lost their force when the American economy evolved from an agricultural to an industrial phase.

**Racial Awareness.** Recent developments in various sections of the country give us the hope that calm reason may conquer the madness that is racism. Negro and white leaders of several faiths met at Atlanta University and drafted specific programs. In New York the National Peace Conference issued a "Statement on Race Riots" in which representatives of twenty-nine religious and secular organizations deplored the frightful prospects of racial disturbances and called on the authorities to act with sympathy and strength. The Inter-Denominational Ministerial Alliance of Hartford has requested the formation of a civic interracial committee to act as a clearing-house for grievances. Under the joint chairmanship of Bishop McGucken, Auxiliary of Los Angeles, and Rabbi Edgar F. Magnin, a county interracial committee will be formed on the West Coast. These are not isolated and unconnected phenomena; they represent American fairness and justice organizing to defend for a minority in this country the rights we are fighting to secure for minorities abroad. All real Americans should support such movements with their full strength.

**Success Story.** Far up on the North Gaspé Coast is the little village of St. Maurice de L'Echourie. During the depression, its fishing boats rotted at the wharves, its land lay fallow, its citizens relied completely on the dole. Now St. Maurice de L'Echourie is a thriving and prosperous town. Responsible for the change is Father J. Alfred Gagnon who, as a sailor in the French Merchant Marine in the last war, won the Croix de Guerre and the Sailors' Medal. About seven years ago he was appointed to this somnolent, poor and dispirited town, and he has transformed it completely. Everyone has a Victory garden, produce from which will take the town through next winter; 200 fishermen put out each day despite the lurking submarines. Father Gagnon has established three cooperatives, one for the fisherman, a cooperative store and a Caisse Populaire, a parish bank or credit union. The townsfolk have aided the war effort not only by their work but by joining the Canadian Reserve Army in great numbers. St. Maurice de L'Echourie is another proof that hard work, social conscious-



ness, ingenuity and charity are still powerful forces in human life.

**"The Impossible Takes Longer."** The mammoth crocodile which has been slumbering motionless for eighteen months in the mud and slime of the Hudson River is showing signs of life. The U.S.S. *Lafayette*, née *Normandie*, is on the way up. Technically, she managed to reach an angle of 39.88 degrees by the middle of last week, from an original list of 79 degrees. What a changed world she will find when she floats again. She went down February 10, 1942, when the Japs were having everything their own way in the Pacific and the Nazis were riding high in Europe and North Africa. She need not worry, however, lest she slept through the war: there will be plenty of work for her to do when she is ready to sail, several months hence. The old girl, whose jealousy of H.M.S. *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth* is too much an open secret to make the gossip columns, will undoubtedly strain every nerve to show that she is as patriotic as they in donning a uniform and putting herself at the service of the United Nations. It has cost \$3,750,000 to raise her, and will cost an estimated \$750,000 more to deck her out for the big show. That is little enough for a ship that cost \$59,000,000 to build. Woman-like, of course, she isn't saying what her plans are—but we can guess. The "beauty experts" who were charged with the discouraging task of putting her on her feet and making her presentable again were inspired by this determined slogan: "Difficult things we do immediately; the impossible takes longer."

**Civilian Economy.** One of the most significant events of the past week was the honorable discharge from the Army of Brigadier General Robert Wood Johnson, head of the Government-sponsored Smaller War Plants Corporation. When Donald Nelson, War Production Chief, drafted General Johnson from the War Department, it was understood that he would retain his military rank only so long as it helped him in his new position. It has now become evident that military rank is a liability to the man who has the responsibility of saving small business in a lop-sided war economy. From now on, if many small manufacturing plants are to remain in business, they will have to be put to work making civilian goods. All those which were able to convert to war production have already made the change. But a champion of civilian production is bound to find himself competing with the armed services for raw materials and manpower, and this competition will be less embarrassing all around if Mr. Johnson puts aside his General's uniform. The deeper meaning of the change is that critics of the Army's "everything-at-once program" have made their weight felt at Washington. They have succeeded in convincing high Government officials that the subordination of the civilian economy to war production has gone so far that war production itself is beginning to suffer. Apparently, it is Mr. Johnson's job to re-establish a proper balance.

## UNDERSCORINGS

**ENTHUSIASM** for the two Americas as a fertile field in which the Papal social teachings have taken root was expressed in a recent article in the *Osservatore Romano*. The article gives a resumé of the Statement issued in 1940 by the Bishops of the United States on "The Church and Social Order."

► Fifteen Bishops, thirty Monsignori and about 300 priests gathered in Baltimore at the Solemn Pontifical Mass of Requiem for Very Rev. John F. Fenlon, S.S., Provincial of the Sulpician Fathers and President of Saint Mary's Seminary. Archbishop Curley pontificated and Father Gillis, C.S.P., preached. Father Fenlon died in Michigan, and a Solemn Requiem was sung there with Bishop Albers of Lansing presiding.

► Chaotic political conditions in Italy might well give rise to confusions which an axe-grinding Leftist press would encourage. To prevent this, Don Sturzo has clarified the position of the Italian Hierarchy. Its appeal, directed to all the Faithful, he points out, "is only for order and peace and not for political approbation of the new Government."

► Three more Chaplains are reported to have died in service: Rev. William Irwin of the Philadelphia Archdiocese, in North Africa; Rev. Neil Doyle of the Hartford Diocese, in the Solomons; Rev. Walter J. Felix, S.J., at Camp Miles Standish. Returning to Washington from a tour of the South Pacific, Admiral W. B. Young, Chief of the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, paid high tribute to the Chaplains serving out there.

► Perhaps the Eskimos at Cambridge Bay Anglican Mission have heard of the American system of baseball trades. At any rate, they have introduced primitive barter into the process of acquiring a missionary. They sent fox furs to "buy a missionary." ► Under the direction of Sister M. Aquinas, "the flying nun," 130 teachers from twenty States have just completed a ten-week course in aeronautics at Catholic University.

► Before returning to China, in June, Madame Chiang Kai-shek wrote a letter to Bishop Paul Yupin which the Bishop has presented to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. The letter acclaims the work of Catholic missionaries and acknowledges gratitude to those who support them and enable them to carry on.

► Speaking in his synagog, the Chief Hebrew Hungarian Rabbi delivered a eulogy on Bishop Zichy of Kalocsa, recently deceased. The Bishop was promoter and president of the association for the defense of Jews, a position in which he has been succeeded by Bishop Apor of Györ (Raab).

► Famous statistician Roger Babson has added his voice to those who decry birth control. He sees in it a menace which will eventually ruin us as a nation.

► Mexico's attitude to the Church is undergoing gradual change, says Father Joseph Ledit, S.J., recently returned from Mexico to Laval University. Priests wear ties and dark suits; nuns wear ordinary clothing of subdued hue. Anti-religious laws are on the statute books but are not fully enforced, as they used to be.

## THE NATION AT WAR

DURING the week ending August 10, progress has been made by the Allies in Sicily. The British, who had been stopped before Catania since July 14, captured it on August 5, and have since advanced.

On the other side of the island, the Americans had a six days' fight at Troina. They had a difficult job. Troina is in the hills, with only one road to it. The Germans had destroyed this road at places where detours were impracticable. Under their shelling it took the engineers five days to reopen the road. Then our artillery went forward to support our sorely tried infantry.

Just before dark on August 5, Troina was subjected to a terrific artillery shelling and air bombing. At 4:00 P.M., the town was intact. As the sun set it seemed blasted out of existence, nothing but a mass of ruins. To make sure, a new shelling and bombing was placed on the town in the morning.

Then our infantry marched in. They found but one German there. The rest had gone. Imagine their surprise when they found the town full of women and children. It had been supposed that they had long before left. They explained that they had had no place to go to, as all of Sicily was a battle-ground, and there was no way to leave the island. Despite the terrific punishment which Troina had received, the reports are that the casualties among the poor people were not great.

Italy is continuing with the war and, for the time being, has declined the only terms the Allies offered her—unconditional surrender. These terms were stated to include surrender of prominent Fascists for trial as war criminals. Most Italian officials, in one way or another, have been connected with the Fascist Party. Threatened with trial by a foreign and hostile court, with a possibility of being condemned to some punishment, which might be death, they seemed inclined to shoot it out. They apparently prefer to die "with their boots on."

The Russians have made great territorial gains. They have taken Orel and Belgorod, and are advancing towards Kharkov. Reports indicate that the Russians are having heavier losses than the Germans. It is therefore questionable how long they can maintain their offensive.

The announced policy of the Germans is to retire slowly and allow the Russians to wear themselves out. This was the Russian plan last year, and it then worked extremely well. The Germans are now copying them. History by no means invariably repeats itself. It seldom does. So there is no certainty that the German plan will work. If the Germans have more reserves than the Russians, it may. As to this there is no information.

There is much other fighting in Russia, without either side having accomplished other than local gains.

In the Solomon Islands, our troops have taken Munda on New Georgia Island. This was the main Japanese base in that area, and its capture was important. It was a most savage fight, the Japs as usual fighting to the last man, none surviving. One more step has been won on the long march to Tokyo.

COL. CONRAD H. LANZA

## WASHINGTON FRONT

AS this is written, Russian absence from the new Roosevelt-Churchill conversations tends to emphasize increasing evidence of Washington concern over Marshal Stalin's apparent unwillingness to lay his cards, military and political, face upward on the table before the Allies. Heretofore the magnificent performance of the Red Army has been a factor in restraining criticism. That is becoming less so.

Moscow's brush-off of the Sicilian-Italian drive with continued demands for a second front; the Soviet's relationship to the Pacific area; scantiness of our military intelligence from behind Russian lines; the matter of reconciling our "unconditional surrender" attitude with some of Stalin's declarations of cease-fighting terms; of reconciling Stalin's ideas on Poland and the small Baltic states with the Atlantic Charter—these are issues being cited to show the need for better understanding with the Russians.

Many months ago this correspondent met a sizable corps of Soviet military observers at an Army camp in the South where maneuvers of mechanized units were under way. Someone remarked the fact that the Russians apparently were being given "the works"—shown everything. An important officer commented: "Maybe it's in the hope that the Russians will loosen up with their military information for us."

The hope seems to have borne little fruit. There probably has been some increase in the quota of inside military intelligence Russia is letting out to her Allies, but sources here say it is still fragmentary. And that appears to typify so many other situations.

Shipping people with whom this correspondent talked in the Pacific Northwest this Spring were perplexed over the fact that Russian shipping was moving across the North Pacific with our Lend-Lease goods with the apparent full knowledge of the Japanese. Why? It is one of the war's anomalies that nobody in official Washington ever has attempted to explain.

President Roosevelt's own regret at the fact that Marshal Stalin would not meet with him and Mr. Churchill was apparent at the press conference at which Mr. Churchill's arrival in Canada was announced. The Russians would not be there, Mr. Roosevelt said, but that did not mean that we would not be awfully glad to have them. At the same conference he avoided any comment on the renewed Russian demands for what Russia apparently holds out for as the real second front—an attack directly across the English Channel.

Certainly there is a growing public fear, now reflected here, that continued lack of complete understanding between the United States and Great Britain, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other, will lead to severe ruptures when the time comes to write the terms of the peace. That the friendly understanding of Allies is needed goes without saying. The frankest possible message to Moscow at this time would be: "Come clean, Joe."

CHARLES LUCEY



# ITALY NEEDS DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT MORE THAN FORMS

JOHN LaFARGE

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HOW serious is the threat of a Communist revolution in Italy? I do not pretend to estimate, nor do I believe any person outside of Italy can make an accurate appraisal at the moment. Throughout the regime of Mussolini, grave fears were entertained by sober and reasonable people, in Italy and elsewhere, that a revolution would occur when Mussolini would fall. Mussolini himself was not averse to the spread of that idea. Now the great collapse has happened, and so far the Communists have not taken power. As the days roll on, the likelihood may diminish, but a possibility remains.

The Communists themselves naturally assume the revolution must soon take place. For them there is no other alternative to Fascism. Their definition of Fascism includes anything and everything which is opposed to Communism. In the Communist idea of Fascism, there are no modalities or distinctions. Fascism is non-Communism, *tout court*, and there is need of no further distinction.

When the Holy Father spoke to the Italian workmen at Pentecost of this year, he expressed his disturbance of mind over the possibility of a reign of chaos as a consequence of the events that were occurring. We can assume he had good reason, at that date, to anticipate the impending fall of the Duce, and the possibility of a revolt which would go far beyond the limits of a revolt against the Fascist regime and would be directed against every semblance of law and order.

Nothing, however, was specified, and the Pope's words of denunciation were so clearly directed against Hitler-controlled Fascism, its ideas and its works, that Communism, in his presentation, would seem to be merely Fascism's natural working out, as Fascism springs from Communism.

So plain is history's lesson as to the second part of this proposition that you wonder how anyone, Communist or otherwise, can fail to recognize it. If I were planning now for another Mussolini, I could think of no surer recipe than the preparation of a genuine Communist revolution. Each type of exasperation leads to its supposed opposite. Fascism and Communism generate one another, since they arise ultimately from a common source: the spiritually and socially uprooted individual struggling with the torment of economic exploitation and the might of a completely secularized State.

But disillusionment as to the Communist proposal should not excuse the illusions entertained by those who see in the threat of Communism a

reason for demanding a sort of Catholic totalitarianism as a legitimate *Ersatz* for dismantled Fascism and a supreme protection against the recurrence of Communism.

Nothing would please the Communist better than for Catholic thought, in this country and abroad, to be generally moved into such a position. Nothing would please them better, for just as Communism naturally generates Fascism, so such a religiously garbed totalitarianism would be the very best entrance in the world for Communism: the text for its sermons, the breeding ground for its agitations, and in numberless devious ways its most effective and subtle ally.

No matter how loudly and impressively a regime may profess its Catholicism, as long as it leaves the temporal problem unhealed, it is impotent to cope with the pagan ideologies of our time.

There is a precise problem to be settled in the relations of the individual to the social group, the adjustment of his inherent and inalienable liberties to the superior authority of the State and to the superior demands of the common good. This problem cannot be evaded. It cannot be solved merely in abstract terms. It must be solved in the conditions of the modern world, with its intercommunications, with its continual material progress and scientific discoveries; with its worldwide contacts and worldwide interdependence and its religious pluralism.

And as long as it is not solved, it leaves the individual face to face with the State. This is a characteristic of our modern existence: the socially atomized individual. Neither Hitler nor Mussolini, with all their efforts to incorporate the individual into the social body, were able, any more than Lenin, with his international, and Stalin with his national Communism, to bridge this fatal gap.

But the bridge must be crossed, and the gap must be filled. It cannot be filled by any governmental fiat, but only by the establishment in society and the State of certain essential guarantees, the recognition of certain great natural truths, as seen in the light of Christian teachings. These, whether we call them Christian democracy or something else, are the only way out of the fatal vicious circle that begins and ends, alternately, with Fascism or Nazism and their numerous potentials, and Communism or anarchy and their kindred developments.

The Holy Father, it will be noticed, has said

nothing about the form of government that he thinks necessary for the coming peace—for the world or, for that matter, for Italy. His utterances have been concentrated upon these great essentials of the natural law, one of which, of course, is the recognition of religion itself. Yet in this country the controversy and speculation, for the greater part, center about the question of the type of government with which we should make the peace.

Few seem to reflect upon what Sir Norman Angell so pointedly expounded in the *New York Times* magazine for August 8: that the government which makes the peace and enforces it will be placed in the worst possible position for its own future stability. Instead of this being the desirable post of honor, it is much more apt to be the theatre of future overthrow and repudiation.

A basic error in this thinking is our apparent inability to distinguish between non-essential differences in the form of government and the essence of democracy, in the sense of recognition of full human rights. Obviously, certain forms of government are of their nature incompatible with any exercise of human rights, such as complete autocracy. But between such extremes and a complete adoption of the democratic process as we know it in the United States, with its universal suffrage, system of checks and balances and of representation, innumerable modalities are possible. We cannot forget that there are aspects of our own democracy which to one of another country, e.g. an Italian, do not look so wholly democratic as they do to us. Our poll-tax, our various methods of political disfranchisement, our system of patronage—with its iron hand beneath a benevolent exterior—and many other ingredients of our daily political bread, do not look so democratic to a supposedly non-democratic foreigner as they may appear to us at home.

All of this calls, therefore, for a more thorough frankness in facing this question of what we mean when we talk about the type of regime with which we can make a peace, in Italy or elsewhere. It calls for a more serious weighing than we have been willing to perform of the possibility that the concentration of the Pope and other religious leaders on certain great essentials is not so impractical as we imagined, not an attempt to escape an issue, but rather the one really honest and straightforward way to go about pursuing it.

The restoration of any kind of peace or order in Italy means the choice between two very difficult alternatives.

On the one hand, on what may be called the side of principle, there are certain moral ideals which must necessarily and unconditionally be affirmed. If those are lost sight of at this moment, as they were lost sight of in the period of selfish rivalry and concessions that followed the first World War, they are lost for good. A small concession to violation of principle now may grow to a gigantic precedent before a year's time is passed. It must be clear beyond question that the false maxims of Fascism must be completely erased—from government, education, from every form of national life.

But, on the other hand, a country which for twenty years has been under the Fascist regime and for some four years under the Nazi-Fascist heel, while it may reject the spirit of Fascism, is still organized or misorganized with a Fascist body. Under Fascism, Italy, like all the Axis and Axis-occupied countries, became profoundly collectivized. Whether this was the actual result of Fascism, or whether it was the result of that inevitable collectivizing of modern life of which Fascism, like Communism, is merely a symptom, is something that historians will have to disentangle.

When a country has been subjected to a drastic war economy to the extent that Italy was thus subjected under Mussolini, a severe blow has been dealt to the very concept of private property. As noted by Frank Munk, in his *The Legacy of Nazism*, a return to private ownership may require practically revolutionary measures.

Furthermore, there is the possibility of recurring unemployment. A generation which has been brought up to believe that this scourge was banished forever by the war economy skilfully built up through a couple of decades, will rise in fury against any government which again exposes them to it, or to the fluctuations of the business cycle. As the same writer observes, however much a totalitarian regime may be hated by its victims, no inclination is made evident to go back to the type of economy which totalitarianism destroyed.

It is not Utopianism, therefore, but extremely practical statesmanship to consider the great, elementary decisions which must be made now, in the way of social and political principle, as a basis for peace and future reconstruction. There are other decisions which have to be made, concerning measures of discipline and means of ridding the country of those responsible for its enslavement. But these former are essential.

It is likewise practical statesmanship to present these decisions as the Pope has presented them and will doubtless continue to do: not as something which he or any other power can impose upon the Italian people, but as a decision which the Italian people will need to make for itself, as a minimum guarantee of an eventual return to a free and normal national life. The Italian people must choose, and none others can speak for them.

They themselves will have to decide how far they can remain collectivist and not betray the fundamentals of Christian liberty. They will have to ask themselves how far they might reconcile a modified degree of Socialism with Christian principles, provided it has been liberated from its anti-religious and anti-clerical obsessions. Some of their answers will doubtless seem strange to us, will advocate policies suitable to Italy, but not to us.

Our interest is not in their adopting a type of regime that is similar to ours, but in their adopting a regime which is based upon those principles of justice and liberty which are the denial of totalitarianism and are common to all mankind. It is likewise to our great interest, as Americans, that in the event of occupation and conquest they be enabled to make such a decision freely.



# LABOR UNIONS DESERVE CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

WILLIAM J. SMITH

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RECENTLY in AMERICA a brief exchange of communications brought the subject of employer-employee relations to the fore. The exchange revealed sharp differences of opinion. The advocates of labor and the protagonist for management both insisted that the other side was taking an unfair advantage of their own position in life. As our perennial friend Pat would say, "It only goes to prove that there are pros and cons on both sides."

Employers today feel that they are being made the victims of a governmental persecution. Some among them, who are of the Catholic Faith, voice the opinion that the Church with its "fantastic" Encyclicals is siding with Labor. The leaders of the trade-union movement, on the other hand, feel that the injustices of the past have been but slightly eradicated and that the workers still have a long way to go before even essential demands of social justice can be permanently guaranteed. Charges and counter-charges made publicly and privately by responsible as well as irresponsible spokesmen and commentators add to the confusion. We should not be surprised that many people hold distorted or prejudiced views on the whole subject of employer-employee relations.

A few pertinent points for consideration may be in order. Take the Catholic employer, for instance, who has spent his life in building up a substantial business. He is a fellow, let us say, who has honestly endeavored, according to his lights, to play fair with his working people. If he now finds himself, time and time again, forced to deal with some unscrupulous, profiteering business agent of a union, he certainly has a just protest to make on his own particular experience. He cannot be blamed if he feels that he is being bombarded by blasts about the rights of the working class and the duties of employers when he hears from a hundred different directions a chorus singing out: "Encyclicals, the Encyclicals."

On the other hand, he may not be entitled to as much sympathy as he would like to have. The very racketeers who now harass and annoy him are very much the product of the labor policies of the employing class in days past. The dictatorial union leader is a by-product of the days when organized management prevented, in every way possible, the growth of a sound, decent, stable trade-union movement. Quite often the only type of labor leader who could meet the repressive measures of the anti-union employers was of the kind that still linger on

the scene and continue to make their demands in the out-moded, unruly manner of the pre-Wagner-Act days. Such labor leaders, still predominant in the building trades, have not yet learned that the law of the land and the courts are at their disposal to press their claims. The employer who is the object of their attentions forgets the unpleasant history behind the rise of such men. He is also slow to remember that the basis of bargaining with the unworthy labor type has been in the past the simple procedure of making a "deal." This takes two to arrange. My informants tell me that the evil was not confined to one side of the table.

No one doubts that there are individual cases where much can be said in defense of the employer. At the same time the admonition of the Popes that we vigorously defend the rights of the working classes is still as timely as ever. The power of organized management and the strength of concentrated wealth have diminished but little, in spite of New Deal "attacks" upon their entrenched positions.

The economic and industrial system of present-day capitalism, the source of our proud boasts and the cause of our unbalanced social order, has been indicted by the Vicar of Christ. Our protesting employers are still part and parcel of that system. Until as a class they turn their attention to the social evils inherent in and consequent to the working of that system, they should not be surprised to see the preponderance of moral support turned in the direction of the struggling masses.

Does this mean that we wish to give a clean bill of health to each and every action of the trade unions and their leaders? By no means. Constructive criticism by the friends of the labor movement should be welcomed by honest-minded workers. The fact is, however, that any slightest suggestion for a more healthy trade unionism is accepted with poor grace by many an old-line leader. We feel no obligation, nevertheless, to fall in line with the thoroughly Communist procedure, seemingly now adopted by the labor press, of shouting: "The Union—right or wrong—the Union."

We hold the opinion that the working people associated in trade unions have a right to muster and maintain all the strength that they possibly can—politically, financially, economically. The United States of America is still a democracy. If the unions can balance the power of wealth by the support of superior numbers, we say: "More power

to them." We in no way share the general distrust of the men who lead labor. Experience with the working classes has taught us that there is no more American, no more thoughtful, no more common-sense group of people in the whole land than those who turn the lathes and pull the switches and run the presses of the nation. We would pit men like Philip Murray and Alan Haywood of the C.I.O. against the best that industry or politics can produce, and we feel certain that for statesmanship, prudence, idealism and a care for the common good, they could measure up to the best representatives of any other class. Even the blackened and beetle-browed John L. Lewis could hold his own against most of the competitors for public acclaim. (If we had not been in the midst of war when the miners' case hit the front pages, John L. Lewis would have stood out as a great, undaunted champion—so just was the case that he represented.)

Nevertheless, there are two general criticisms we would offer to the leaders of labor, for the good of the movement. The one pertains to the A.F.L., the other to the C.I.O. It is necessary to make the distinction, for the two organizations are becoming more and more dissimilar. The leadership of the C.I.O. is progressive, keen, "on the ball" and "on the beam." The A.F.L. is smug, satisfied and inclined to be content with the *status quo* so long as the balance of power that certain sections possess is left undisturbed.

A good proportion of the progressiveness of the C.I.O. comes from the Communist element within its ranks. Extremists, propagandists to a disastrous degree, public howlers, persevering and persistent nuisance *provocateurs*, the "Commies" set the pace for many a movement within the organization. The constructive elements must keep on their toes all the time to keep up with the driving force that the Reds put behind their programs. The genuine progressives must be on the alert to direct these disruptive energies into better channels and to present programs of action that will appeal to the millions of the rank and file. They must prove to them that the constructive strategy is for their betterment.

Critics of the C.I.O., who are impatient with the seeming toleration of the "Commies," forget that a labor organization is not a mechanical apparatus in which parts of the plant can be shut off by pressing a button. A trade union is a society of men and women with human passions and emotions, pushed hard by economic necessities and propelled by prejudices. Its measuring norm, for the most part, is the wage scale and working conditions. Critics also forget that anti-union forces are always hovering near, awaiting the collapse of any workingmen's organization.

It has been called to our attention that the national policy of the C.I.O. is definitely "anti-alienisms" of all kinds. This was determined at a meeting of the national executive board in Cleveland a few months ago. That is the healthiest sign we have seen to date and, needless to say, we are all for it. The national officers deserve the support of all truly American-minded trade-union supporters,

both within and without the labor movement.

The temporary toleration of many of the Communist units in the C.I.O. is, in the minds of its leaders, the lesser of two evils. We believe that national C.I.O. officials are making a determined effort to weed out the radical Reds in places of authority. We suggest that the constructive elements keep up their courage, increase their efforts and, wherever possible, enlist the support of outside influences in ridding their organization of Marxists. We suggest that a rigid clamp be put on the publicity propaganda that the Party-liners are using in entirely too many C.I.O. publications. A more forthright stand would be the biggest boon imaginable because it would guide aright the new or the wavering candidate for office within the movement.

The A.F.L. has an even more serious problem. As the Communists in the C.I.O. are both an incentive to action and a threat to the leadership of that body, so the self-satisfied smugness of the A.F.L. is both the source of its stability and at the same time the cause of a deadly stagnation. The democracy of too many parts of the old organization is purely nominal. In its general set-up, the A.F.L., in many ways, resembles an old political party. The same spirit of compromise, the same dependence on local ward-healers, infects it. It has neither the unity that an inexperienced observer would expect, nor the "autonomy of the local" that the national officers proclaim. To a great extent, it has been built up by the pressure methods of old, and respects the rights of the rank and file far less than might be expected in this more enlightened age of real collective bargaining.

The Kaiser case provides a good example. Although the 50,000 or 60,000 workers never had an opportunity to choose their affiliation, leading men in the A.F.L. went so far as to advocate the scrapping of the Wagner Act rather than see their hold on this local area loosened. Certainly, the rights of the rank and file were not the first consideration of the men on top. Less dramatic but perhaps even more dictatorial incidents could be cited.

The greatest mistake that the leaders of the A.F.L. are making today is their seeming disregard for public opinion. They make little effort to gain the confidence of the many outside groups whose influence is steadily growing in public affairs.

Any prophet can see that in postwar days the trade unions will be very much in need of capable defenders. The task of defending them will be all the harder unless some of the more foresighted union leaders take steps now to place that defense on solid ground. Neither the toleration of distinct abuses of unionism nor the tenuous dependence upon the political party in power will be of much assistance to offset the prejudices of an aroused public, the resentment of returning soldiers or the dissatisfaction of workingmen who had been high-pressured into the ranks of union membership.

The common good is the common responsibility of all our citizens. To promote what is good, to repudiate evil no matter in what rank or state we find it, is the honorable duty of all who desire and deserve to see the nation prosper.



# ESPERANTO CONFERS GIFT OF TONGUES

GABRIEL N. PAUSBACK

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IN a recent editorial of the *New York Times* the question of a world language was discussed with timely acumen, and the only presently practical solution to the question the writer could suggest was—Esperanto.

"Thus far," the editorial begins, "a common ideal has held the democratic nations together. If they had a common language the amalgamation would be better than it is, because it would transcend the necessities of war." Another paragraph marshals facts as follows:

In the last six hundred years we have had a score of proposals. All have perished, except Esperanto, which is spoken and written on occasion by an estimated million and a half persons; endorsed by half a dozen scientific and philosophical congresses and societies, as well as by the League of Nations, the International Red Cross and the International Labor Office; included in the correspondence courses of Great Britain's Army Education Service, and taught in a few score British schools.

With current secular thought thus approving the only world language that has been able to stand the test of over fifty years' experience, we Catholics, who rightly glory in the catholic or universal character of our Holy Church, can well ask ourselves what attitude that Church takes in regard to this world language and, further, what possibilities of fruitful use Esperanto offers for Catholic purposes.

To many it will come rather as a surprise that Esperanto has already received the blessing of three Popes. Pope Pius X, besides sending his Papal blessing on more than one occasion to the International Congresses of Catholic Esperantists, expressed himself thus: "I recognize the usefulness of Esperanto to preserve unity among the Catholics of the world. Esperanto has indeed a great future before it." Pope Benedict XV, while still Archbishop of Bologna, publicly manifested the desire that some of his priests help to propagate an auxiliary language like Esperanto, and afterwards, as Pope, he too blessed one or more Catholic Esperantist Congresses. Pope Pius XI, of cherished memory, in a letter directed to the Italian League of Catholic Esperantists, spoke of his pleasure at the message of fealty sent to him by the League, and encouraged their efforts as worthy of praise for the help they would give toward spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To these names of the Popes, we might add the celebrated names of Cardinals Gasparri, Cerretti and Piffi, and a number of other Princes and Pontiffs of the Church.

But before we go further in the discussion of the valuable Catholic uses of Esperanto, let us brief-

ly review the reasons why this world language should be chosen above one or another of the more widely used languages of today—like English or Spanish. English, of course, would be the immediate choice of most Americans. Its grammar is simple enough, and it is already used by a relative majority of the world's inhabitants. But to offer a very practical objection, pronunciation makes English one of the most difficult of European languages to learn, and still more difficult for many people to master.

Further, looking at the matter from the viewpoint of others, would our English-speaking peoples be willing to accept Spanish as a world language? What experience the present writer has had with several modern languages makes him think that Spanish would be the most acceptable from the viewpoint of ease in learning and power and beauty of sound and expression. In every case national, and even religious, differences would stand in the way.

And really, why should any particular nation be so honored by having its language made worldwide? Or, why should any particular people be given such an advantage over the others? Moreover, the difficulties that would beset the language itself and its people, were their language to become a world possession, would not be by any means an indifferent consideration.

Could Latin become the world language? It is neutral, it was once the universal language of scholars, and today is still the official language of the Catholic or universal Church. But Latin also is too difficult: the thought of the irregular verbs alone will evoke dismay from those who struggled through a few years of Latin in high school. Further, Latin has no words for so many of the things we use today. It is a splendid language indeed for philosophy and theology, but for talking about things that the Romans never knew—like pockets, watches, matches and cigarettes—it would be rather strange indeed.

To all these difficulties and others like them, the simple answer is a modern, neutral language, easy to learn, complete in its power of expression, and not without beauty of sound and facility of pronunciation and, better still, one that has been tried and tested by time. Such a language is Esperanto.

First, it is neutral. Esperanto, just because it is not the language of any particular country, is the more acceptable for all countries, since it avoids all the difficulties and frictions that we mentioned.

Esperanto is also easy. From an article in the *Pan-American* (July-Sept., 1942) by Miss Doris Tappan, New York, Co-Director of the Pan-American Interlanguage Association, we cull the following:

The basic vocabulary of Esperanto has been extracted from the main European languages. The Latin language groups can recognize up to eighty per cent of the root-words immediately. The English and Germanic language groups recognize sixty per cent to seventy per cent. Every device was employed in its making to secure a minimum of difficulty, with a maximum of flexibility.

Esperanto's basic vocabulary consists of about 1,000 words, but a great variety of new words can be built up from this base, because of a regularized system of suffixes and prefixes. There are sixteen grammatical rules, no exceptions, and no irregularities. Verbs, which are nightmares in most national tongues, are extremely easy to master and use. The alphabet of twenty-eight letters is absolutely phonetic—one letter, one sound—and a remarkable approximation to the basic International Phonetic Association symbols.

Esperanto is also complete in its possibilities of expression, and it is tested by more than fifty years of experience and by the use of several millions of people. Dr. Zamenhof, originator of Esperanto, who published his first work in 1887, was, we can say, about fifty years ahead of his time; yet the very precociousness of Dr. Zamenhof and his co-workers gives to Esperanto today the inestimable value of tested utility and even of worldwide acceptance for the international and Catholic possibilities that are today opened to this global tongue.

Very particularly, for the immediate present, in the conditions of the World War, Esperanto can be of tremendous use to our Service men. What opportunities the Chaplains would have of speaking not only to their own men, but to the men of any nation with whom they might come in contact, if Esperanto were more generally known! Chaplains could preach in one language, and everyone present would understand. More specifically for our Catholic Service men, Catholic Chaplains could hear confessions in a language that would be intelligible to both allies and enemies alike.

And what a boon this to the prisoners on both sides! Vividly outstanding is the example of a Hungarian Catholic priest during the last war, Father Cseh. He was placed in charge of a group of prisoners of many nationalities. Unable himself to use effectively so many languages, he gathered the prisoners around him to teach them the easiest language possible—Esperanto. Since he had to teach different language-speaking groups at the same time, his method was almost entirely direct. Happily, he was able to perfect his method to such an extent that today it is used in the International Institute of Esperanto named after him.

If only we could distribute simple Esperanto pamphlets to all the Chaplains and Service men in the world as their regular equipment, what a wonderful advance it would be for the spiritual consolation of our fighting men! The soldiers have the time; and it would be fun learning.

Then Esperanto can help in the missionary work of the Church. From the Encyclopedia of Esperanto we gather the interesting information that in Canada a Catholic priest in the State of Manitoba heard confessions, taught catechism, preached and gave other spiritual help in Esperanto, and thereby overcame the difficulty of reaching his parishioners, among whom more than seventeen different languages were spoken. The same happy solution has been found by other zealous missionaries.

In the cause of Church unity, Esperanto can also

serve as a tremendous aid. While it is true that the Catholic Church has Latin for its learned and official language, it is also true that, for all more ordinary purposes, the work of the Vatican Curia is conducted in Italian or French and, unofficially, in any other modern language. How much simpler such intercourse would be for strangers to the Eternal City if all Catholics throughout the world would learn Esperanto! Then, without difficulty, they would feel perfectly at home, not only in Rome, but with their co-religionists all over the world.

All the progress that Catholics have already made in this field, particularly in Europe, as, for example, in the International Catholic Esperantists Union, and in the use of Esperanto in International Catholic Congresses—for instance, at Budapest in 1938—all this we leave aside, to take up in passing another closer-to-home aspect of the question—Esperanto as it has been used, and is being used today, in Catholic Brazil.

The latest evidence comes in the form of a beautiful 44-page pamphlet entitled, *Esperanto and Catholicism* by Dr. Mario Ritter Nunes, an official of the Brazil Institute of Geography and Statistics and a Delegate for Statistics and Catholic Affairs of the International League of Esperanto. The pamphlet is a printed version of a conference given during a meeting of the League of the Sacred Heart of the Cathedral of St. Lawrence in Nictheroy on the 27th of September of the past year; and from it we glean the following.

On the occasion of the first Brazilian Congress of Esperanto in the City of Rio de Janeiro, His Eminence, Cardinal Arcoverde, sent his representative, who spoke at the Gospel of the Mass on the subject of Esperanto. The Cardinal's representative did the same at the Esperantist Congresses in Petropolis and Juiz de Fora. In other Esperantist Congresses also, the clergy, and even members of the Hierarchy, were in active attendance.

Several Catholic groups of Brazil have been happy to hear lectures on Esperanto and even to arrange for courses of study of this "Second Language." The second Brazilian Congress of Catholic Journalists, held in Rio in October of 1940, passed a resolution manifesting its interest in Esperanto, and asking that Esperanto be received as one of the official languages of the International Congresses and be taught in the nation's schools. In Brazil also, which, according to last year's census, is 99.997 per cent Catholic, there is published a lively Esperantist quarterly with articles both in Esperanto and in Portuguese.

May we summarize here briefly as follows: Esperanto, besides having the approval of so many organizations of note, has also the approval of the Popes and of other outstanding Catholic leaders. It is an easy language, effective and, above all, neutral. And it has been used with particular effectiveness by zealous priests, both in war-time and in peace-time, for the welfare of souls. Our conclusion? Why, I'm going to learn more about Esperanto, of course!



# MEDICAL NEEDS AND SERVICES

W. EUGENE SHIELS

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IN many phases of American life, the tendency today seems to be toward social planning. This is particularly true of the effort to make the benefits of American medicine available to a wider public.

It is an old problem for, as population grows and shifts, and medical service improves, there is always a lag between demand and supply. But of late, particularly since the Supreme Court decided in favor of a Washington, D. C., medical group and against the American Medical Association, there has been an insistent clamor for socialized medicine, with all medical personnel under the direct management of the State. Editors in several metropolitan dailies are advocating such plans. Various lecturers and political personages have taken special interest in the subject.

The point is that many of our people, for one reason or another, do not enjoy adequate medical assistance. Hospital charges are high. Unusual operations, such as cerebral or optical surgery, and even the rather common appendectomy, are out of range for the low-salaried groups. Numbers do not share in workmen's insurance. Publicly supported hospitals are often overcrowded or too far away. Hence the argument for general health insurance. In any well-organized social system, public provision should be made for the serious accidents that regularly befall mankind.

It is common knowledge that all cannot obtain all of the best in medical service everywhere and always. Municipal clinics and hospitals serving the poor in numberless cities provide fine diagnosis, treatment and surgery, but their facilities are limited. On the patient's side, there is often a disinclination to ask for charity when he cannot pay the bill, just as there may be lack of knowledge of how to make contact with the many doctors who give free service to the deserving. Then, too, it is sometimes said that wealth alone can buy the best; though as a matter of fact the best service is often provided by medical men whose charge does not exceed moderation. And certainly our country is endowed with a large number of well-trained and hard-working doctors, nurses and hospital staffs.

The war has made the problem increasingly sharp. Government reports state that something like 44,000 doctors have left civilian life and entered the services. This calls upon the rest of the doctors to provide for the entire civil population—a burden on them and a hardship to the suffering.

To meet these various exigencies and to enable more people to enjoy proper medical aid, groups have formed hospital-insurance plans which, for a small premium, guarantee care to the sick who could not otherwise afford hospitalization. From

another quarter, bands of doctors in four widely separated States have formed associations to offer to insured groups whatever medical care is called for. Recently, several men of the profession in New England made the suggestion that all doctors be drafted, given commissions by the Surgeon General of the United States, and then allocated, especially in certain rural sections where there is a positive lack of physicians. The farthest step yet contemplated, and one that proposes an over-all solution of the problem, is the currently considered Wagner-Murray Bill (Senate Bill 1161), which would provide free general medical, special medical, laboratory and hospitalization benefits for four-fifths of the country.

The following citations aim at nothing more than an indication of the general nature of the Bill. In Section 905 we read:

1. Any physician qualified by the State . . . can furnish medical service in accordance with such rules and regulations as may be prescribed [by the Surgeon General of the United States].

2. Every individual . . . shall be permitted to select his own doctor or to change such selection in accordance with such rules and regulations as may be prescribed [by the Surgeon General].

7. Payment to physicians may be made:

a. According to a fee schedule approved by the Surgeon General.

10. The Surgeon General may prescribe the maximum number of individuals for whom any physician can provide service.

Dealing with hospitals, Section 907 provides that:

The Surgeon General shall publish a list of institutions found by him to be participating hospitals. (Italics ours.)

The trend toward collective handling of the medical problem quite naturally arouses sharp differences of opinion. The humanitarian sympathizes with whatever will ameliorate the woes of suffering mankind. Sometimes he is a "simplifier" who sees no counter-issues, but grasps at the first coherent scheme which appears to implement his case. Such a one might approve and join in a public demand for total control. For the "joiners" are a constant in American life. Others envision more mature plans.

For several years the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and similar periodicals have dealt with the subject. Their House of Delegates in the 1943 meeting debated the matter, and the press reported their views as well as their divisions. Standpatters frowned upon innovations. More alert men of the profession, seeing the problem and the really potent forces aligned in the effort to revolutionize medical practice, have already formed committees—such as the National Physicians Committee, with headquarters in Chicago—to study the projects, inform their colleagues of continuing developments, and bring before the public their best thought on the next steps to be taken.

In this momentous debate there can be no disinterested onlooker. Lack of concern would ill become one who seriously attends to the welfare of his country and his fellowman. However, the debaters are diverging so widely that it seems imperative to strike a middle course. The regimenta-

tion of medicine, while seeking well-described benefits, may certainly run great risks. The issue must be faced squarely.

The basic issue, then, is this: would Federalized medicine so affect the profession as to cause its practice to deteriorate? Would it thus, in the long run, ruin the finest medical service in the world and give the patient—the average American suffering physical ills—results inferior to what he receives today? To this question all others should yield, whether they be that of providing medical service *gratis* or at a nominal cost, or of the rights of the profession to its present legal and social position, or of the current existence of training centers, research centers, corporate groups or financial investments. It is true that no social order worthy of the name can fail to provide service to take care of its major accidents, but that service may not be so regulated as to vitiate the service itself. What the public wants is American medical aid at its best; not a minimum of advice and prescription, but the saving of life and health according to the excellent standards which we have built after long and intelligent efforts to provide the utmost within human possibility.

There can be no issue on the freedom of the individual to enter the profession, or of the patient to seek medical aid, or of the State to legislate for the proper practice of medicine. The question is how to make competent medicine widely available.

On one point we must be clear. Medicine is not primarily a business, even though many doctors make a good living thereby. It is a profession. And a profession means the work of men and women who serve others, with a skill developed under severe training, for the aid of those who are in personal trouble. The ministry, the law, medicine, and what is called "welfare work," fall under that definition. No professional operates mainly for profit. All are supported by their work—"the laborer is worthy of his hire"—but their service is given fundamentally to benefit others, not themselves. And all work solely for the individual sufferer, to solve his individual problem and bring him back to normal life. The doctor, outside of public health work, does not directly serve the mass. He can be called a public servant only by indirection. His contract, like the lawyer's, begins only when he agrees to take his case, and it is concluded when the case is concluded. If he often serves in emergency, or at the call of the public in a general calamity, that is beyond his ordinary obligation and is due to claims higher than that of his special profession.

All professional service shows a picture of high, medium or low value, depending upon the skill, the powers, and the devotion of the professional person. So, too, the accessibility of this service varies according to the ability of the one in need to obtain the service. In some localities it may be impossible to find a lawyer, doctor or priest. Again all three will give their services freely, but all deserve from the recipients a reward that enables them to carry on their service. For in a sense their services are priceless. Then, too, the nature of legal and medical

aid is such that unless the giver assigns specified fees, his subject may go off without remunerating him, and thus it has come to be the accepted custom that he ask a fixed fee for his assistance. If this fee is high, the reason is usually the quality of the service, recognized as eminently superior.

It was not always thus. A study of English medieval hospitals shows that doctors and nurses often lived the religious life with vows of poverty. But no one could expect that of all men. Such conduct demands a Divine vocation.

The specific thing about these professional people is their training, their service, and the individual terminus of their effort. Now government might provide the training freely, though that is open to debate. But government could never provide the ambition, sacrifice, complete devotion to one's fellow man, as the ideal professional person has it. Nor could government command that entire attention to the individual which is the mark of these professions.

Now, will public regimentation of health servants operate to preserve the profession, and thus ultimately help to preserve the body politic? It seems that such action—as, for example, that contemplated in Senate Bill 1161—would create a new class of political doctors. And in America political classes are commonly subject to the influence of political practice, in seeking emoluments and avoiding burdens, unless we take the rare case of the unusually elevated individual. The system as it works does not raise personal ideals. But doctors without high personal ideals are a menace, both to the patient and to the public.

Specific possibilities suggest themselves. Would the doctors be given assigned sections of the population for their care? And in that case, would they give personal and individual service, or would the patients be given mere routine treatment?

What would become of in-practice study and research? It seems inconceivable that all doctors would spend days, weeks and months in unremunerative experiment, in attendance upon scientific congresses, in after-hour reading of the latest findings of the profession, when the only tangible reward would be a better public appointment at a slightly higher salary. And we could scarcely expect such doctors to face the risks, the dangers and sacrifices constantly present in the pursuit of their calling.

For public rule of medicine would not grant the rewards that now inspire the doctors to make the most of their native gifts and abilities. Such rewards are their good name among their fellows and among present and prospective patients, the satisfaction of personal interests in knowledge and technique, the consciousness of service well done and of having that strictly professional excellence which is the aim of the medical fraternity.

To improve our medical aids, surely more clinics would help. Hospital insurance does help. Privately organized group practice could help. But any general system which would lower the professional standards in medicine would definitely not help. We must keep that thought foremost in all our planning on this question.



# PRAYERS FOR "GRIM REAPERS"

BENJAMIN L. MASSE

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IN October, 1942, it was still pretty much touch-and-go in our campaign to expel the Japanese from Guadalcanal. On the night of the twenty-fourth, an American naval squadron prepared to engage a powerful enemy force steaming down from the north. At stake were not only Guadalcanal, but also the island approaches to Australia and our whole life-line to the Southwest Pacific. The result of the ensuing battle off the Santa Cruz Islands is now a glorious page in our naval history. Stories about it continue to be told, and will be told and retold as long as a grateful nation cherishes the memory of its fighting men.

One such story, told by a "Grim Reaper" to Stanley Johnston, appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* for August 8. It recounts one of the most inspiring episodes of the war to date, and deserves to be reprinted here. For permission to use the material which follows, I am indebted to the *Tribune*.

As the American ships awaited the enemy's approach on the night of October 24, Lieutenant Commander (now Commander) James H. Flatley, leader of the famous Fighting Squadron VF-10, U. S. Naval Air Force, better known as "The Grim Reapers," sat prayerfully in his quarters on the Carrier U.S.S. *Enterprise*, composing a letter to his men. He had no fears about the ability of his boys to cope with the wily Jap pilots, but, as he explained later:

I began to worry about the boys spiritually. Many were very young. Although strong in mind and body, they were just between ages. They were no longer boys, of course, but it would be several years before they reached maturity.

Being a practising Christian myself, I wanted to complete my job. The ship's Chaplain was there, naturally, to give these young men comfort if they should approach him. But I wanted to do something more for them if I could.

And so Commander Flatley wrote a letter which some of the bravest lads in the Air Force will not forget to their dying day—a letter which adds a golden page to the rich annals of the United States Navy. Copies were typed and delivered to the "Grim Reapers" individually. In the privacy of their quarters, on what must have been for many of them the most solemn moment in their lives, here is what they read:

"Doubtless you have been reared a Christian, even though you profess no specific belief. All Christianity vocally or audibly or tacitly acknowledges there is a Supreme Being, usually referred to as God. The Bible tells us God is our Maker; that He gave us a free will and conscience. He also gave us the Ten Commandments to guide us in our daily relations with our fellow man.

"He told us that if we obeyed these Commandments to the best of our ability, we would be rewarded after death by being received into Heaven and, conversely, if we deliberately disobeyed them we would be justly punished.

"Now God in His wisdom knows the weakness and frailty of the human being. He knows the many temptations and pitfalls that beset us. He only asks us to do our level best to keep His Commandments. However, we are not perfect, and every man is guilty of failure in a greater or lesser degree.

"Therefore, in His justice, God is willing to forgive if the transgressor, having failed, is truly sorry for his sin and resolves never to commit sin again.

"What is all this leading up to? Only this. We are fighting a war today against enemies who for the most part are not Christians; who deny the existence of God—the Nazis and the Japs.

"We love peace and the fruit of peace. We fight heathen enemies who not only seek economic gain, but, if they are victorious, would stamp out Christianity.

"Ever since Christ's birth, 2,000 years ago, one ruler or another has tried to stamp out Christianity. So far no one has been successful. If we believe in God—and we do; if we believe in His infallible wisdom and justice—and we should—then we can rightly ask ourselves this question: 'Why are we being subjected to this world-wide conflict?'

"The only answer, both from a historical and theological analysis, is that, as Christians, we have failed. . . . We have disregarded His Commandments. Our wills have become weak, our consciences hardened. We have offended God and, as Christian nations, are little better than heathens. . . . We have become hypocrites, professing one thing and practising another.

"What's the answer? The answer is a return to God. How can we return? By getting down on our knees and praying, or just praying if we don't believe in kneeling; by professing, maybe for the first time, our belief in God—by professing a love for Him who made us. By asking for blessings and particularly for strength to do our duty bravely. And that duty today is to meet our enemies, who also are God's enemies, courageously and without fear, secure in the knowledge we are fighting for what is right."

And the letter ended with the well known quotation from Abraham Lincoln: "I'm not interested in having God on my side. I only want to be on God's side."

Accompanying the communication from their Commander were six prayers, all carefully typed out, beginning with the "Our Father." After all, some of the boys may have forgotten the words, or perhaps had never learned them. With the Japs over the horizon, Commander Flatley was taking no chances. He had trained the "Reapers" to fight for their country. Now he would teach them to die for it—and for their God.

P.S. Dear Jim: I know, if this copy of AMERICA reaches you, you're not going to like this, but blame Stanley Johnston, not me. God be with you and love you. B.L.M.

## THE WEAKNESS OF SECULARISM

SPEAKING at the luncheon which followed his consecration on August 2, the Most Rev. Bryan J. McEntegart, newly inaugurated Bishop of Ogdensburg, talked of a matter that lay close to his heart. He was deeply concerned, he said, over the increasing tendency of the surrounding world to push the Church into isolation. We have a serious problem, in his estimation, with the steadily growing secularization that is developing in public life and public agencies.

These were no words of a religiously-minded alarmist. They were spoken by a moderate and tolerant man, who has enjoyed years of experience in friendly and fruitful collaboration with all types of public officials, in the charities and social-work field. Bishop McEntegart's assertion causes us once more to propose the question to ourselves. What is the most effective, the most strategic manner of combating this tendency toward a steadily increasing secularization?

Obviously an all-essential condition for any effective campaign to maintain and increase the respect shown to religion in the policy and administration of public agencies, is to strengthen and deepen our own Catholic life.

The Catholic layman thoroughly formed in Christian social teaching, who makes his yearly closed retreat, who reads at his leisure Saint Thomas Aquinas and commentaries upon the Epistles of Saint Paul, is obviously better qualified to defend the outposts of religion in public life than the rear-of-the-church standee whose only hope is to get by with the bare minimum of observance.

But defense against the secularizing process runs short unless it can make inroads on the hidden weaknesses of secularism. It should unmask the secularist's impotence to do the very things he has professedly set out to accomplish.

Catholic apologetics convincingly demonstrate that the secularist position is irrational. But abundant work is still to be done in showing that this position is impractical as well. Dealing with a pragmatic generation, an ounce of pragmatism will go a long way.

Nowhere can this be more effectively shown than when problems of human welfare and the human family are dealt with. Experience of secularist handling of these problems adds up to a glaring conclusion. War's pressure, with its devastating strains on family life and public morals, is sharpening this conclusion, and bringing it home to a wider public. Only the Church has the key which fully sets free that balance between the material and the spiritual that make up the life of man. Only a doctrine founded by One who fully knows all that is "in man" can probe to the bottom the inner springs of human success, human failure in the difficult art of living for oneself or living with others.

Now is the time for religion to assert its Divinely given prerogative as the supreme interpreter of that mystery which is man.

# EDITOR

## SHAM BATTLE

FACILE propagandists would like the country to believe that we have a choice today between State Socialism and our traditional free-enterprise system. The picture they paint is all in clean-cut black and white, with the angels of Individualism lined up in battle array on one side, and the legions of Collectivists spouting challenges from the other.

How inadequately this canvas represents reality can be seen in a minor way from a study of the effect of war on British retailers, released last week by the Senate Small Business Committee. Prepared by the Office of Price Administration's United Kingdom section, the Report confirms the popular belief that small retailers are much less able to navigate the rough seas of wartime shortages and red-tape than are the chains and other large stores. To help keep little fellows afloat, the British Government has allotted shares of scarce goods to them and has fixed quotas for each section of the country. In addition, a program of postwar priorities is being drafted to enable firms closed by the war to re-enter trade on a competitive basis.

How, it may be asked, does the current government-free-enterprise debate square with this and similar wartime developments? In Britain, governmental controls have been extended over all retail business; yet this extension of public authority and regulation has as its chief purpose the preservation of a system of private enterprise! In this country, the Smaller War Plants Corporation was established by Congress for the same general purpose.

Like all problems in our highly complex, industrialized society, the question of the relation of government to business admits of no easy answer. Order might be brought out of chaos by the adoption of the guild principle to business, but it is very doubtful whether the American public is prepared at the present time to accept such a radical solution. Meanwhile the trend toward bigness and monopoly continues; the area of competitive enterprise grows daily more restricted. The practical question today is not whether State Socialism or free enterprise is to characterize the postwar economy, but how and to what extent government must intervene in economic life to save competitive enterprise and to extend it.



### PRAYER AND PEACE

CHESTERTON, in two ringing lines, has described a Papal call for help in another day when Christian civilization was sorely threatened: "And the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss, And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross." At the beginning of this month, the present Pope issued another appeal for a Crusade, this time not of arms but of prayers.

In a letter to Cardinal Maglione, Papal Secretary of State, the Holy Father exhorts the Bishops and, through them, the Faithful to redouble their prayers for peace and to support those prayers by an interior "renovation of life in keeping with Christian teaching and principles." It is a message written in obvious anguish: sincere, fatherly. It was occasioned by the approaching Feast of Our Lady's Assumption and by many requests.

He recalls his unrelenting efforts "to replace hate by charity and to substitute for discord and combat, mutual agreement and the quiet gifts of peace." But since men refused to listen, the Pope turns to the "Father of Mercies and God of all Consolation," begging Him to give them the grace to "retrace their steps in penance and prayers."

In this prayer he asks all of us to join that we may shortly witness not a mere embittered cessation of hostilities but a true "Christian peace through which alone victors and vanquished may be brought together again, not by force but by justice and equity . . ."

With many churches and other cultural and religious monuments in Palermo, Messina, Cagliari, Reggio Calabria, Alghero, Civitavecchia and Naples ruined, and with political unrest infecting all of Italy, the Holy Father asks:

May we be allowed to appeal in a most particular way to the most dear people of Italy that, in this gravest crisis, they may rival the faith and Christian virtues of their ancestors and thus, as in times past, so now also, obtain from God that which both We and they desire, calling on the intercession of that innumerable cohort of Saints which their native land has given to Heaven in every age?

It is a noble document, just, charitable, insisting once more on the strong strategy and the sword of the spirit. It will be the hope of Christian men that it will not fall on deaf ears.

OUR chief objective in waging the bloodiest war in human history is to defend the democratic way of life against the threat of a resurgent pagan totalitarianism. Whether we can achieve this goal merely by inflicting a crushing military defeat on the enemy is a very dubious proposition. Mr. Roosevelt does not believe that we can. He has taken the position that the world is not large enough to contain the conflicting systems of democracy and tyranny, and a large but indeterminate number of our people agree with him. They subscribe to the thesis that our democracy can never be secure until the "Four Freedoms" are enjoyed throughout the civilized world.

That is a noble vision—the fruit of two thousand years of Christian teaching and practice—but it must not blind us to the many difficult problems it poses. It must not blind us, either, to the instant necessity of observing scrupulously at home the rules of civilized behavior we zealously propagate abroad.

From widely different viewpoints, this latter consideration has recently been called to the nation's attention by two of its most respected public servants. Speaking at Detroit, on August 9, to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, expressed deep concern over the abuses of free speech which are daily exacerbating the racial and religious conflicts in our society. "We are fighting," he said, "for freedom of speech, but I hope the day will come when it will be recognized that freedom of speech does not carry with it the license to destroy, incite, subvert and misrepresent the truth." Although Mr. Hoover mentioned no names, those who have investigated some of our recent race riots will understand that he had in mind the professional agitators, many of whom are Communists, and the sensational newspapers, some of which are reactionary, whose undisciplined treatment of delicate racial issues contributes notably to the outbreaks.

Two days before Mr. Hoover spoke, Carter Glass, veteran eighty-five-year-old Senator from Virginia, stigmatized another flagrant abuse of free speech. Obviously disturbed by the increasing bitterness over domestic policies at a time when the nation is fighting for survival, Mr. Glass warned that "the prestige of the American people, so vital in its dealings with other nations in this critical hour, should not be cheapened by petty partisan politics." Vindicating the right of criticism—Mr. Glass has himself been a frequent critic of the Administration—he nevertheless reminded us that "name-calling, attempted political throat-cutting and disparagement of the President of the United States is deplorable."

It is significant that both Mr. Hoover and Senator Glass are concerned with abuses of the right of free speech which are disrupting the home front and endangering the progress of the war. What an anomaly it would be if we were to jeopardize our

high resolve to guarantee the right of free speech throughout the world by abusing that right at home. And yet that is exactly what certain powerful groups in this country are doing. By their inflammatory treatment of racial and religious problems, by their ill-advised attempts to make political capital out of wartime necessity, they are weakening the home front on which our fighting men depend, and undermining our moral influence throughout the world.

In a democracy such as ours, there is only one effective way of dealing with this disorder. We must remind ourselves, as Mr. Hoover has said, that liberty is not license. The right of free speech involves an obligation to respect the canons of decency and prudence, of justice and charity. This discipline we must impose on ourselves, by speaking of the critical problems of the day with that maturity and sobriety of judgment which testify to a fitness for self-government, without which liberty degenerates into anarchy and democracy becomes a sham. Let us not forget that while this war is a challenge to our military might, it is even more a test of our devotion to Christian and democratic ideals.

## TERMINATING WAR CONTRACTS

AMONG the five or six subjects which have the widest reader appeal, economics is understandably missing. While the economists themselves are partly to blame for this—many of them, like the sociologists and educationists, use a jargon which only the initiated can understand—we suspect that the main difficulty springs from the nature of the science itself. You cannot talk economics without talking figures and statistics and graphs; and the average fellow has little liking for this sort of thing. He can keep a check on his wife's expenses, watch big-league box scores and the time made at Empire or Hialeah, but that is about his limit. The chaste beauty of a column of figures leaves him cold.

The occasion of these profound reflections is a late report of the Army Ordnance Department. As we scanned the figures and learned that ten times more war contracts are outstanding today than in World War I, we found ourselves wondering whether the average citizen, whose intelligent vote is the life-blood of democracy, realizes what is involved here. Some day about 240,000 contracts, totaling approximately \$75,000,000,000, will have to be terminated. Will this complex process take place in orderly and honest fashion, with proper regard both for the health of business and for the taxpayer's pocketbook? Will it hasten or retard the trend toward monopoly? Promote postwar prosperity, or obstruct it?

These questions are not nearly so intriguing as the results of yesterday's doubleheader at the Stadium or Gunder Haegg's fastest time for the mile; but on the answers to them greatly depend our own individual welfare and the entire shape of things to come.

## THE SCHOOL OF HUMILITY

IN every great problem there is a master problem. If you solve that, the rest will be plain sailing.

In the ordering of our life, which is the service and love of God, the master problem is to achieve humility. If that is done, all else falls into place. Courage, prudence, love and wisdom all follow on humility. The humble man is strong, and the humble man finds the key to purity of heart. If he is tempted, humility helps him to resist temptation. If he falls into sin, humility helps him quickly to rise from the depths.

Humility would be easy enough to practise if we were wholly reasonable, for humility, when you analyze it, is nothing else than the recognition of the full truth about yourself. You know you are just so big and worth just so much in the sight of God; and if you are humble, you acknowledge it, and make no pretense of anything different.

But a deep unreason is planted in each of us by our inheritance from our first Parents, who were led astray by the Father of Lies. This means that humility does not come to us merely by hearing of it, but it has to be learned, and that with great labor and no end of unpleasantness.

If you study the rules or constitutions of the great religious Orders of the Church, ancient or modern, for men or for women, you find that the greatest part of their training and no small part of their lifelong regulations are aimed at making and keeping people humble. One of their methods is to acknowledge their faults one to another.

Christ our Lord was not content with merely setting the example of humility. He taught it directly. "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart," He said, "and you will find rest for your souls." The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (Saint Luke, xviii, 9-14) shows us how we can by-pass a hundred perplexities in this matter of learning humility and reach it by a short cut. So direct and so unconventional was this route to humility, and thus to holiness of life, that it shocked and startled those who listened to our Lord. He taught them that men became humble—and thus entered on the straight path to being "justified," which means being holy—by acknowledging their sins.

In the parable of the Unjust Steward, the Saviour took the worst enemy to brotherly love, which is money, and showed how it can be made love's instrument. In this parable He shows that even sin, which is the supreme evil, and is the negation of holiness, can be made, when we repent of it, a means of achieving humility. "I tell you, this man went back to his home justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

These are good thoughts to carry with you into the confessional. The Sacrament of Penance is not just a way to be liberated from the guilt of sin. It is also a school of holiness, because it is a school of humility. After a humble confession a man is not only purified, he is sanctified. We can never learn too many lessons in this school.



# LITERATURE AND ARTS

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## FOR STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

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THE America that was Stephen Benét's heritage and medium of expression came to him as naturally as the breath he drew. The grandfather whose name he bore was a graduate of West Point, as was his son, James Walker Benét, Stephen's father. In such an Army family, the map of home constantly shifted. But his mother had a remarkable faculty of making a home anywhere, and Stephen always declared she would have made an excellent pioneer.

He was an observant, delicate boy of seven when he first saw Benicia, the early capital of old California, at whose Arsenal were spent half a dozen of his most formative years. Apart from the brown, rolling hills, the sighing eucalyptus and pepper trees, the blue water of Carquinez Straits at his doorstep, there were summer camping trips to the Yosemite Valley with its ancient Indian trails; to the Lake of the Woods in the majestic Sierra Nevadas. Such a region had the power to thrill as it once thrilled the early settlers.

Stephen was the child of exceptional parents whose constant companion he was, the older son and daughter being away at school. The father, a man of brilliant intellect, was an omnivorous reader, a student of history and passionately attached to lore connected with his family. The mother, whose inheritance was English and Scotch-Irish, delighted in life and possessed the dramatic gift of story-telling. She told him tales of her family, of the ancestors, Scotch-Irish traders who had journeyed over the Alleghenies to Pittsburgh, their old home, and the numerous and warring personalities that had colored her childhood. The big, white house at Benicia was probably Stephen's first intense memory and, for a set of Army quarters, this was a rare home, spacious, full of laughter, harboring many guests, and the center of congenial talk and wit. In the midst of the coming and the going moved one bespectacled little boy who said he was "going to write simply and in the grand manner."

When he was thirteen, the scene changed again. California was exchanged for a sultry Southern land with sandhills and a rolling muddy river, soft-spoken Negroes and poor whites who lived on pork and were the color of parchment. Above all, Stephen was to hear and be steeped in the legend of the Civil War that clung to this city of Georgia—Augusta. Summers were spent in the North Carolina mountains at an untouched spot called Highlands where no motors had yet found their way. From this re-

mote bit of America he absorbed the feuds and the language, the customs and terrors of the mountain folk, with their hidden stills, their fiddling contests, their dances. Out of such experience grew *The Ballad of William Sycamore* and *The Mountain Whippoorwill*. At fifteen, the American scene was already gradually, serenely, vividly expanding in his mind. The tales of the cruel war between North and South were stirring his blood. When he visited his grandmother's home in the family town of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, he was taken out to the Gettysburg battlefield and shown graves, monuments and landmarks. His father built up every phase of the tremendous struggle before his boy's eyes.

At seventeen, Stephen entered Yale, and his first small volume of poetry, *Five Men and Pompey*, was published. But it was after marriage and the birth of children, when, strangely enough, he was living in France on a Guggenheim Fellowship, that Stephen accomplished his superb epic, *John Brown's Body*, the narrative of the Civil War. Accepted by the people, this book swept the country and was bought by business men and women who had never read a line of poetry. The age was one of difficult and abstruse poems, such as T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and the work of Ezra Pound. Here was the first American poet since Whitman, whose successor Stephen might be called.

After the event of *John Brown's Body*, that made his name permanently, it seemed as if his land crystallized in Benét's work. In conjunction with his wife, he brought out *The Book of Americans* and began to write fiction in which America's battles and discoveries, her joys and sorrows, regional wit and humor, most highly sophisticated and most humble characters shone forth. Among the strongest and most imaginative were *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, *Johnny Pye and the Fool Killer*, *The Waters of Babylon* and *A Tooth for Paul Revere*.

Yet, when war broke out in Europe, how burningly he took to heart the terrible conflict abroad! *Litany for Dictatorships* was written long before our country was swept into the mêlée. How unutterably he sympathized with the exile, the expatriate, the victims of the Nazi regime! And in the next breath how tenderly he could write of human mortality in *Old Man Hoppergrass* and *The Sparrow*. As a spirit he had gone far and had become acquainted with the universal range of man's

heart and mind long before the poetry poured forth from his pen as a result of this long and rich experience.

America was his signal success as a writer. Poets had not thought it worth while to sing of their own country; poets were too occupied with exotic variations of their own experience and temperament. Stephen Benét related the beauty, fantasy and varied riches of his mind to the national scene. Continuous journeys North and South, East and West, to cities and towns, where he read and lectured to a rising tide of youth, kept every nook and corner of his land fresh before his eyes. In interpreting the joys and griefs of his fellow humans, he was warmly understandable. The people always knew what he was saying; his words did not sweep and soar past them. He talked their language.

As the people's poet, the people's spokesman, the champion for democracy who laid aside his own work and gave his strength for the cause he loved and the country he believed in, Stephen Vincent Benét will be most deeply remembered.

LAURA BENET

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ONE late October afternoon, some years ago, I rang the bell at 220 East Sixty-Ninth Street, in New York. The door was opened by a very tall, middle-aged, frail-looking man wearing heavy tortoiseshell glasses and inclined to baldness. There seemed little out of the ordinary about him except his hands, so beautifully shaped that one put him down at once as artist or poet. After cordially shaking hands, Stephen Vincent Benét led the way down a darkish corridor to a sort of back-parlor. The stone mantel, old-fashioned wallpaper and horsehair furniture, dating from the mid-Victorian period, proved exceedingly restful as a background for conversation, after the bustle and confusion of Manhattan's city streets.

Soon Mr. Benét was discussing Chesterton:

"I first began to read him when in my 'teens and even at that time it puzzled me how little his verse was known in comparison with other modern poets—for the most part of such smaller caliber. Few of his contemporaries could achieve such stirring lines as:

When all my days are ending  
And I have no songs to sing  
I think I shall not be too old  
To stare at everything  
As I stared at a nursery floor  
Or a tall tree and a swing.

That truly is in the grand style. *The Ballad of the White Horse* and *Lepanto* are in my opinion among the very finest of all modern ballads; they keep up their high quality throughout and are altogether glorious. If I had written them, I certainly wouldn't worry about being remembered after my death.

"Among American poets definitely influenced by Chesterton was Vachel Lindsay. For instance, it is not difficult to detect an echo of *Lepanto* in *General William Booth*:

Dim drums throbbing in the hills half heard  
Booth enters boldly with his big brass drum.

"Lindsay had an extraordinary mental grasp of the folk-tunes of American speech—camp-meeting, soap-box, tramp, and so on—but they never broke through into his own verse until after he had read and digested the verse of Chesterton. In fact, my own *Drug Shop, or Endymion in Edmonstown*, which I wrote while still a student, owes much to the *White Horse*. If it had not been for this, the stirring *Lepanto*, and other G. K. pieces which I find myself rereading every chance possible, many of my own poems, I am convinced, would be far less effectively written.

"Another stanza of Chesterton's I often find myself repeating is:

Hark! Laughter like a lion wakes  
To roar to the resounding plain,  
And the whole heaven shouts and shakes  
For God himself is born again.

"You often hear it stated that Chesterton was so unique that he never inspired others. At least in Lindsay's ease and mine it was not so, and I shall always be grateful to him."

When I spoke of his *John Brown's Body*, that famous epic of the Civil War published in 1928, as a distinct contribution to American folklore, Benét answered:

"Folklore has long attracted me. Folk tales, songs, proverbs, beliefs and customs always held my keenest interest. I early became interested in the folk stories that centered around Davy Crockett, the frontiersman, Paul Bunyan, the gargantuan lumberjack, and many other real or semi-mythical characters who were supposed to flourish just before the Civil War. I have always been interested in determining whether like customs in widely separated groups originated independently or had a common origin."

"What is your opinion of folksongs, Mr. Benét?"

"Well, my feeling is that folksongs are rarely more than melodies, are always anonymous, and are transmitted orally from generation to generation, undergoing various changes as they are passed along. Folk music is often extremely fine in quality—not only the Negro contribution, but also that which derives from old English sources such as the mountaineers of Kentucky and Tennessee."

Shortly before leaving I asked Benét what poets he had been reading lately.

"Of late, I have been rereading some of Coventry Patmore, a member, as you recall, of the Pre-Raphaelite group and a frequent contributor to its journal, *The Germ*. His outstanding characteristic was well hit off in the subtitle of Sir Edmund Gosse's fine biography, *The Laureate of Wedded Love*. *The Angel in the House* has always been one of my favorites. I agree with Patmore that human love, instead of being an obstacle to Divine love, should become a beautiful and wholesome approach to supernatural experience. I admire his delicate thought, his copious, fervent, yet wonderfully restrained emotion and his word-music, always splendid and varied."

CYRIL CLEMENS



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## TANGLEWOOD

Like buckskin and broadcloth and strange American  
shillings,  
Like samplers and pistols and dry Plymouth mayflowers,  
The lovely, various music of our people  
Is gathered now and treasured here in Berkshire.  
Shrill on the wind the fifes of Lexington,  
The riot of the fiddles in a backwoods tavern,  
The spinet's elocution in a Gramercy parlor  
Implicit in the sighing, wind-wroth trees.  
Here where the clouds have room to cast their shadows  
As wide as townships on the far, bright water,  
In these sweet meadows tilted from the lakeside,  
Where Hawthorne's daughters gathered ox-eyed daisies,  
America has built a place of song.

FRANCIS SWEENEY

## NIGHT SENTRY

"Halt! Who goes there?"

It is I, Jesus Christ, Son of the living God;  
I go everywhere:  
To the crumbled cities I go,  
I look at them with appalling, with infinite compassion,  
I leave the cities in their steaming disarray,  
For intense and eager men will come and rear them  
up again;  
I go beneath the avalanche of stone,  
I seek the structures I have wrought from out My  
Heart,  
I go to those beneath the rubble and the steel,  
I raise their immortal architectures,  
(I the architect)  
To My unshakable foundations among the stars,  
The buildings of their souls will stand and shine again,  
I tell you now.

I walk the fields where blood has damped the wheat,  
I reap the golden, wind-blown sheaves of youth  
And barn them warmly in My Love.

To the seas and oceans I go,  
I walk their crimson waters,  
The troubled, festered waters,  
I calm them,  
I lift their noble flotsam to My Heart.

To the domes and pinnacles of cloud I go,  
I scan the firmament,  
I watch the silver birds in frantic flight,  
I see the ice, the flame, the sooted fall;  
The hapless plummet-birds, I gently catch  
And cup within My Hands.  
Their wings unbend and strengthen,  
They undulate with fulness at My Touch.  
Greatly, now, they soar,  
Their songs are trembling-sweet  
Within My flower places,  
Where only petals fall.

Therefore, watch Me well, Sentry,  
For though I be the sculpture of a man,  
I am your Maker and Preserver,  
I am your living God.

"Advance and be recognized."

You will know Me by My hurts,  
The wounded Hands, the Feet, the Side;  
And never will they heal and sweeten  
While men are sworn to wound each other.  
You will know Me by the hurts within My Eyes,  
The Eyes that love and see no Love  
Among the tearers and the renders of one another,  
They wield the scourges, thorns, gall, nails and spears  
that I well know.

Have you no gift for me  
Save scourges, thorns, gall, nails and spears!  
For wounding one another,  
You wound the wounds in Me.

"Halt!"

Yes, the halt, the sick, the blind,  
I sought them all,  
And washed away their woe  
With love and tender, bathing touch.  
You, now, all you who maim each other,  
Who make each other halt and sick and blind,  
Come but to Me, and I will make you whole;  
If you will love,  
If you will love the brother whom you hate,  
And in him,  
Me.

"Carry on, Sir!"

Yes, I go on,  
On down the sorry halls  
That once I knew as bright and singing,  
Your noisy walking places,  
Where haters rake and claw,  
Who want My Love,  
But hate, unknowing of their need.

Adieu, lone watcher of the night,  
Watch well for these are Mine,  
As are the others whom you seek to kill;  
Adieu, God with you,  
I.

JOSEPH DEVER

## PRICE

(Captain Kelly Lets His Daughter Go To Be A Nun)

Tiffany, Tiffany,  
What are you doing  
Deep in the mines  
And under the sea?  
Come out of that, Tiffany,  
Out of the caverns,  
Out of the ocean,  
And listen to me.

I own a jewel  
Pearl as the moonlight,  
Blanche as a sunrise  
Set on a hill;  
Billions of bullion  
Never could buy her,—  
Only the Gold  
Who is God ever will.

THOMAS BUTLER

**"Here is the Christian plan for  
salvation today,"  
says the current Yale Review**

Florence Cohalan, in reporting on this book for the Catholic Book Club last fall, said: "Mr. Dawson is calling us to an active apostolate in a very hard field. **If we refuse the challenge, Europe and the West will perish.** If we accept, we shall have to make enormous sacrifices for a great ideal, but we shall be true to the historic mission of the Apostles."

Since that time **THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS** has been praised by **Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Jesuits, Benedictines, Paulists, Dominicans, Franciscans, Passionists**, to mention a few, as well as by an important few of the secular press.

It may be profitable to review here just what has been said of this book. **AMERICA** (Jesuit) said: **"There is only one thing to say: It must be read."** **ORATE FRATRES** (Benedictine) said: "It is a book to read, re-read, study and incorporate into one's mental fabric." **THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE** (Official Methodist journal with a circulation of nearly 250,000) said: "A noble book, profoundly faithful to the truth." **THE PROTESTANT VOICE** (representing 33 Protestant groups—the review by a Presbyterian) said: **"Here is sound reading for the religious leaders of the people."** **THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER** said: "It is one of the most significant statements of the causes of the present world crisis and of the possible hope of the future that has been contributed by any writer."

Of Christopher Dawson **THE SIGN** (Passionist) said: **"He deserves to be read in connection with the encyclicals: that is the highest compliment we can pay him."** **THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE** (secular) said: "Mr. Dawson is the most exciting writer of our day . . . unequalled as a historian of culture. Unless we read him we are uninformed." **COMMONWEAL** (liberal Catholic journal, edited by laymen) said: **"It is scarcely possible to overestimate the importance of Christopher Dawson."** **CHRISTENDOM** (an Ecumenical review published by the American sections of the World Conference on Faith and Order and the Universal Council for Life and Work) said: "It is doubtful that there is another mind in Europe or America through which the many currents of modern thought flow with such clarifying and transforming results." **THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR** said: "Few better guides can be found than Professor Dawson." **THE NEW YORK SUN** said: "Whoever desires an intelligent and informed discussion of modern civilization and its destiny had better read Christopher Dawson."

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## BOOKS

### MOST ARTFUL DODGER

**A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN.** By Betty Smith. Harper and Bros. \$2.75

**YOU** may not know it, but there is a Society for the Prevention of Disparaging Remarks about Brooklyn. Its President reports that slurs against that noble Borough dropped from 6,457 in 1941 to 2,623 in 1942. I venture to state that when this book becomes well known, as it certainly will, slurs against Brooklyn will be greatly counter-balanced by encomia heaped upon her, or at least upon this one citizen, Betty Smith, and the family of which she writes.

For this is a remarkably fresh and warmly humane story. It is called a novel; it is rather the biography of Francie Nolan, from her twelfth to her sixteenth year. The first chapter opens with her taking her weekly collection of junk to Cheap Charlie's, to collect her fabulous penny; the last chapter closes with her ready to move from the old neighborhood and start in college. In between, adolescent dreams and impressions, escapades, dangers and disappointments are set before us in a fresh simplicity of style and language that is truly good.

Francie is Irish, Catholic and poor. Irish readers may not like the book, but they ought not forget that the slovenly characters in it are more than overbalanced by the warm-hearted goodness and generosity that animates the others. The Catholic elements in the story are a little clumsily handled at times, with the consequent suspicion that the author is not quite sure whether the beliefs are motivated by faith or superstition. Emphasis on poverty—which of course, cannot be avoided, for that is the environment the author has chosen—tends to stress the impression that poverty of itself is brutal. Francie was poor, her life was hard and "underprivileged," but she had a marvelous mother, a kind, companionable (if too frequently drunk) father, a warm, loyal family life—and lots of fun. If that be brutality, plenty of children could stand a bit of it.

One or two incidents in the story could well have been played down a little, as, for example, Francie's nearly disastrous experience with a pervert; but these frank passages and the vulgarity of expression that crops up from time to time need not be a worry to sensible and mature readers.

These elements, of course, follow from the fact that the author chose to put her foot in this particular portion of the stream; granting that she writes of that type of life in that town at that time, the picture is authentic. Certainly we have in this alive book a vivid recapturing of childhood. Any reader who ever collected old newspapers in his youth, under the impression that he would soon get rich thereby, who fell in love with vaudeville stars, who reached seventh heaven with a penny bag of cake-ends from the neighborhood bakery, will see his youth again, and nostalgically, in this Brooklyn masterpiece.

HAROLD C. GARDINER

### SHAPE OF ECONOMIC FUTURE

**GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS TOMORROW.** By Donald R. Richberg. Harper and Bros. \$2.50

**IF** a man even casually reads the newspapers today, he must be aware that, beneath the external unity imposed by the war, there rages a bitter controversy over the future shape of our economic order. The issue is capitalism, its relations to government, to labor and



to consumers; and on the final determination of these relations depends the kind of a society we are going to have in postwar America.

To this debate Mr. Richberg makes a professional contribution. I say "professional" advisedly, because few men among us have had a richer experience, both in public and private capacities, of the contemporary industrial order. Many will recall Mr. Richberg as the one-time head of the NRA, but only a few may remember him as the author of the Railway Labor Act, one of the most successful pieces of industrial-relations legislation in our history. A firm believer in private industry and in organized labor, the author adds to his authority an insight and sympathy which should commend him equally to labor and management, to liberal and conservative.

While duly respectful of the achievements of industry, Mr. Richberg stigmatizes businessmen for their mistakes in the past and for their present stubborn resistance to necessary change. He believes that our "capitalist system may be preserved through regulation in the public interest by a democratic government," and he calls upon business leaders to take a constructive and cooperative part in this regulation. While recognizing the need for a certain amount of planning, he prefers as far as possible the "natural regulator" of competition. Heretofore, he points out, there has been too much talk of free competition and too much practice of monopoly; too much complaining about unfair competition and too little constructive work to control it. In general, management has not admitted or assumed the great social responsibilities consequent on the growth and complexity of the modern industrial order. Failure to do so has resulted in the growing regulation of business by government.

Labor, too, has made and is making serious mistakes. Despite its present strong position, compounded of its own economic strength—which management has learned to respect—and the support of a friendly Administration, it has lost a great deal of public good will. The chief reasons for this, according to Mr. Richberg, are jurisdictional squabbles, toleration and support of criminal labor leaders and the failure of labor leadership to manifest an increased sense of responsibility commensurate with its new power and authority.

In the course of the book, the author discusses many contemporary questions: the relation of Congress to pressure groups; the accomplishments and failures of trade associations; the use of force in industrial relations; Government supervision of foreign trade; patents, cartels and competition; Nazism, Fascism and Communism. He is always stimulating and generally sound. Only when he tries to justify his belief in goodness and liberty, in right and law and justice, does he stumble badly, as every pragmatist must. But to the discerning reader, this book is highly recommended.

BENJAMIN L. MASSE

## RADIUM DAUGHTER'S RAMBLES

JOURNEY AMONG WARRIORS. By *Eve Curie*. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$3.50

THE talented and accomplished daughter of a famous mother writes another book; this one describing a journey of 40,000 miles among the warriors and statesmen of the United Nations. The biographer now assumes the role of journalist, and the reader first meets her, sitting in a plane with forty men, flying to Africa. This introduction is apt to prejudice the normal he-man; but let him read on, and he will find that the author is no ordinary bold scribbler; nor does she resemble the monotonous, standard type of American reporter who writes our war books. This lady brings to her task a broad background of culture, a knowledge of languages, and the prestige of a name which ensures interviews and invites hospitality.

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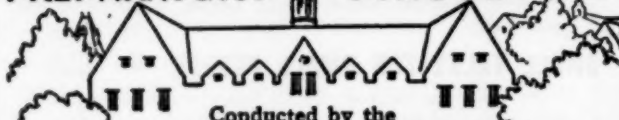
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India, Burma, China. She interviewed many prominent soldiers and statesmen, not including Stalin. But in Russia she got about and saw more factories and battle fronts and talked directly to more people than any recent traveler. Scenery she views with an artist's eye; and as for persons, she wins their confidence, draws them out, puts the right questions, and then describes them so vividly that widely different characters, a Gandhi, a General Wavell, or a Chiang Kai-shek, come to life before you. Her list of notables is a litany too long to repeat. Throughout the book there are emotional soliloquies which leave the mature reader cold, but one politely endures them; they are interludes.

The accurate descriptions of rooms, costumes, food and customs will please feminine readers, and the men will be interested to find so much information packed into the volume. The writer has no particular axe to grind, except that she would win your sympathy for France and for Poland, her mother's country. The picture she draws of religion in Russia is dark; but against this is the devotion of the Polish soldier to the Mass.

Some women who rush about the world are irritants, but not so Eve Curie. A vivacious, experienced French woman, she is splendidly equipped, mentally and emotionally, to travel among Asiatic peoples and to observe with sympathy their manners and institutions. But this is a book for the educated: Wendell Willkie simplifies things and writes down to the low level of the millions. The best seller is seldom the best book. One could wish that the author had better understood the internal evils which sapped the vitality of her own country.

GEORGE T. EBERLE

PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGY AND CATHOLIC EDUCATION. By Brother George, F.I.C., M.A. Brothers of Christian Instruction, Notre Dame Institute, Alfred, Maine. \$2.50

THIS book is just what its title suggests: a practical application of long teaching experience to religious instruction and training in the Catholic primary and secondary school. Rightly the author believes that to achieve the end of Catholic education, mere instruction will not suffice. And the book is more than an idle exhortation. It is filled with details and methods on how to form Christian leaders in deed as well as name. References to some sources, especially on the methods of Saint John Bosco, would be welcome in a revised edition of this valuable little book.

More attention might be given to adjustment psychology, and especially to the prevention of fears. The need of stressing the positive in religion and morality could be made more explicit. Certainly a different evaluation, both physical and moral, must be placed on such diverse items as movies, smoking of cigarettes, alcohol and night life. Yet they are mentioned in one breath as the "great enemies of public health in general, and of the physical welfare of children in particular." At times, too, much is read into a text of Scripture, and some words are loosely used, as is the case with the word "miracle," on p. 40.

These blemishes will hardly detract from the value of the book. They are mentioned not in a spirit of criticism but as suggestions for the further contributions of the author, which we hope will be many, in this fruitful field.

HUGH J. BIHLER

JAPAN'S MILITARY MASTERS. By Hillis Lory. The Viking Press. \$2.50

BASED upon long residence in that country, upon friendships with military men there, and upon serious investigation rather than mere gossip, this volume is the fullest and best exposition of the strength and the philosophy which has made Japan into a military nation today. The country is not, according to the author, dominated merely by a militaristic clique. It is aggressive, hateful of the white race, patient, scheming, capable of complete sacrifice in the cause.

Although the leaders may guide, the education of the army officers and rank and file, too, has been to develop



an extreme nationalism untempered by wide experience or balanced knowledge. Their attitude they have communicated to troops who came and went in successive annual conscriptions and, through them, by their paternalism, actually to the people. They are close to the people, and the people are close to them and devoted to them. Preparation for war to a bitter end or an overwhelming victory has been the sole thought of army men for decades. They live hardily; they think only of war; they exercise only with the sword or the bayonet; they do not permit themselves at their schools in their youth even to think of girls.

This is the nation, bitter with hate, indoctrinated to stubborn singleness of act and thought, hostile to the point of extermination towards all white men and their ways—this is the nation with which America is now locked in what is really a life-and-death struggle. Not the least of the author's impressive points, aside from the generally excellent array of facts telling of the control of the army and the control of the people by the army, is his complete proof of the manner in which we in the United States have steadily underrated the Japanese. We paid for that at Pearl Harbor and with the surprising Zeros over Manila and Corregidor. We have let Japan get strong. We shall pay still more if we permit the mistake to be repeated. **ELBRIDGE COLBY**

**THE LIFE AND WORKS OF BEETHOVEN.** By John N. Burk. Random House. \$2.75

THIS new volume on Beethoven falls into two sections. The first half of the book is a solid biography which steers a course midway between the popularization of Emil Ludwig and the exhaustive documentation of Alexander Thayer. The second half lists all, and analyzes most, of the works of the composer.

The story of the troubled life of this great man is told by Mr. Burk with directness and follow-through; the main thread of the narrative is always visible, and the reader does not lose his way in a welter of anecdotes. There is a welcome absence of the romantic nonsense so often associated with accounts of Beethoven's life. But Mr. Burk does not minimize the passion of the man, the terrible curse of deafness that clouded so much of his life, the inner struggles and compulsions which left him no peace. Talent may not always entail suffering, but Beethoven's genius was certainly inseparable from pain.

But whatever torments Beethoven had to undergo, Mr. Burk makes clear once and for all that the composer was no starving musician working poverty-stricken and neglected in a garret. Beethoven was, in general, held in high esteem by his contemporaries and, if he had financial troubles, they were due more to his own bad management than to poor pay.

Mr. Burk's style is a little on the old-fashioned side. Occasionally he falls into triteness of expression (e.g. "poverty . . . had done something dark and twisting to the soul of the sensitive child"), and his enthusiasm for the master's music sometimes leads him into over-indulgence in purple patches.

The analyses of Beethoven's compositions, which take up the second section of the book, are executed with a loving hand. Perhaps there is too much space devoted to the symphonies, and not enough to certain other phases of the composer's output. Here and there one looks for a favorite item (such as the clarinet trio, Opus 11), to find it listed without discussion. No injustice is done to the piano sonatas, however.

On the whole, both for purposes of reading and reference, Mr. Burk's volume is a welcome addition to the library shelf of the general reader. **J. G. BRENNAN**

**HUGH J. BIHLER** obtained his Ph.D. at the University of Vienna. He is a professor of psychology. **ELBRIDGE COLBY**, an authority on the East, is a professor at the School of Military Government, The University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

**J. G. BRENNAN** is a professor of philosophy at the College of New Rochelle. He is author of *Thomas Mann's World*.

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Translated by

**Dom Bede Rose, O.S.B., S.T.D.**

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IF WE WERE to classify all sciences and arrange them in hierarchical order, the first and most important would be theology. Within this science the chief object of study is God Himself. And in our study of God, the question of primary importance concerns the nature of God, the very meaning of the word "God" itself. Implicit in this definition are certain truths that enormously enrich our idea of God. Philosophical conclusions are confirmed and amplified by divine revelation. Although when we speak of God, our very language applies by way of analogy, yet the contents of our knowledge about God is exceedingly abundant.

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EACH year a new crop of budding song writers tries to enter that field of fame and fortune, popular song-writing. Most of them fail to gain recognition, and invariably blame their misfortunes on hard luck. Many are convinced that their songs are as good as those heard on the radio. They are encouraged by their friends and family but cannot understand why the publishers return their manuscripts unopened.

A few years back publishers would try over songs that were mailed in and, if they could not use them, returned them with rejection slips. Later, after some publisher had published a song that struck his fancy, and had made it a "hit" through good promotion, he was frequently sued by an amateur song-writer who thought the fourth and fifth bars were fashioned after his song that the publisher had previously rejected. While no one has ever collected, to my knowledge, these "nuisance suits" have frequently cluttered up legal departments, so now all manuscripts go back unopened.

However, there are always new songs like the current favorites, *That Old Black Magic*, *As Time Goes By*, or *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To*. There are "new" composers, lyric writers and song-writing teams. How do they get a break in the field of swing music?

There are only two ways. First, come to New York and visit the music publishers. The odds are that it will take six months to a year before they will begin to show interest and take you seriously. The second way is easier on the song-writer, and if he has finally written that "hit" song it will come to the surface. Do you remember a song called *It's A Sin To Tell A Lie*? It was written by an unknown amateur in Baltimore. He gave it to all the band-leaders, large and small, and asked them to please play it whenever they could. He went to the local radio station and arranged to have it introduced on the networks whenever possible. Nothing startling happened for a while, but he kept on plugging his song before the Baltimore audiences. They created a demand for the song by sending in requests for it, and a large New York publisher heard about it, secured the rights, and it became the hit of the year.

This proves that the song-writer can start his songs "locally." Make a list of all the places in your community where popular music is played or, better still, sung. If your song is as good as you think it is, they will use it. If you have a little local success to report to a noted band leader, he will listen to you, as many a band and singer have been made by a song that they first introduced.

At an interview, Irving Berlin gave a few pointers on the formula of a good swing tune. The idea of the song, or the emotion with which it deals, must be known to everyone, and expressed in concrete, homely, everyday terms. The lyrics must be euphonious, and the total effect must be simple.

The melody must be within the range of the average voice; it must appeal to the person having an untrained voice as well as the technically trained public singer.

The title of any good song must have been planted effectively in the body of the song. It must be accented again and again through the verse and the chorus. The title sells the song, so if you have a title that people can forget, you have a song they can forget.

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# THEATRE

**TWO MORE SUCCESSES.** It is an unusual experience for dramatic producers of New York to turn out two successes in one mid-summer week. They have done that this month, and all lovers of good theatre share their elation. The successes, of course, are *The Two Mrs. Carrolls*, Martin Vale's new play, and a stunning revival of Franz Lehar's *The Merry Widow*, over which many of your grandparents chortled thirty-five years ago.

In addition, there was during the same week a disastrous farce, *Try and Get It*, which was withdrawn after eight performances. It was sponsored by a producer who has not yet learned that dirt alone will no longer draw audiences into New York theatres.

*The Two Mrs. Carrolls* might have been called *Miss Elizabeth Bergner*. It is Miss Bergner who is the big attraction in the new play, and whose charm and acting should ensure a long run for it. She surprises even her most ardent admirers. For the play offers her at least a golden opportunity to show her versatility in half a dozen different moods. We see her in turn as a care-free young wife, as a thoughtful one, as a suspicious one, and as a woman in terror of her life, which she realizes at last her husband is planning to take. This lends to the play such strength and action as the melodrama has, which is considerable after the heavy first act.

Miss Bergner is the second of the two wives. She is warned by the first wife, who has escaped the fate planned for her, and who saves her successor.

There is no betrayal of the plot in this revelation. Mr. Vale throws his whole situation at his audience early in the action. After that all we have to do is to watch its effect on the present wife. It is from then on that Miss Bergner thrills us by her art. She is superb. She even makes the final scenes seem credible, which few actresses could do. Her scene of hysterical terror at the end of the play, which most of the women in the audience will take home and dream about unpleasantly, is among the best acting I have seen this year.

She has good help from the company as a whole. Victor Jory as an impressive killer, who broods ostentatiously over his plans, is excellent. So is Vera Allen as the first wife, who objects to indiscriminate killings. Michelette Burani, a French maid in this offering, can warm up any play for me. It is with difficulty I resist the temptation to describe again her fine work in an important role of a play that failed early this season. Reginald Denham knows how to direct a melodrama, and Frederick Fox has made some good sets for this one. I predict that Messrs. Rend and Czinner, the producers, will be able to keep *The Two Mrs. Carrolls* at the Booth Theatre for a long run. No lover of good acting should fail to see Elizabeth Bergner in it.

**THE MERRY WIDOW.** The New Opera Company and Yolanda Mero-Irion are offering us a really brilliant revival of *The Merry Widow*, complete with excellent sets and costumes by Howard Bey and Walter Florell, a revised book, and a really fine company. Their reward should be great, for *The Merry Widow* at thirty-five is as young and engaging as she ever was. Sidney Sheldon and Ben Roberts have brought her as near '43 as necessary. Marta Eggerth and Jan Kiepura are excellent in the leading roles, and Melville Cooper's comedy is really amusing.

There is much beautiful dancing, especially that by Milada Mladora and Chris Volkoff. The entire company is on its toes, but special tributes are due Robert Field, Ruth Matteson, Gene Barry and David Wayne.

*The Merry Widow* will be with us for a long time. But go and see it while the costumes are fresh and the company is still exhilarated by the newness of its big success.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

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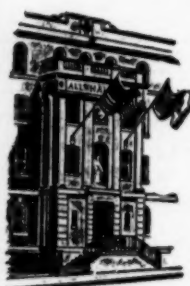
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## FILMS

**WE'VE NEVER BEEN LICKED.** War comes to Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College in this picture. Even if the drama and triangular love-interest which have been whipped up against this background were not as satisfactory as they are, the story of the institution with its methods of training in peace and in war would merit consideration. Starting before Pearl Harbor, the tale revolves around Richard Quine, who after some years in the Orient comes to Texas Aggie; Noah Beery, Jr., his roommate; and Anne Gwynne, the love-light of their eyes, who is the daughter of a professor. Quine gets in wrong with everyone when he seems too friendly with some Japanese students. The audience is always aware of his true purpose though his companions are not, but when war starts the boy proves to all that he sacrificed his name and friends only as a prelude to sacrificing his life for Uncle Sam. Everyone in the family will find this object lesson on patriotism mildly diverting. (Universal)

**TARTU.** The mysterious title of this British-made spy thriller is the name taken by an English agent who sets out to commit sabotage at an Axis poison-gas plant in Czecho-Slovakia. There is an over-abundance of melodrama as he fulfils his mission, with numerous expected and unexpected twists, but the whole thing is excitingly handled and will have moviegoers hanging on to their chairs much of the time. Robert Donat as Tartu gives a credible, if somewhat exaggerated, performance in impersonating a member of the liquidated Rumanian Iron Guard. Valerie Hobson is the Czech member of the underground who complicates things because she refuses to accept the spy's real identity. After a chase at the finale, done in comic-strip tradition, the secret agent accomplishes his purpose and escapes from the Nazi villains. However, adults who are willing to take some of the more implausible goings-on with a grain of salt are guaranteed a tense and spirited session at the theatre. (MGM)

**THE KANSAN.** At last, Western fans have something that they can put their teeth into and be cheerful about. This saga of the early, turbulent days in the Wild West follows the beaten track in story, while the gunplay, fast riding and even the expected romantic clichés are served up in tasty style. Set in post-Civil-War days, this is the tale of a Kansas frontier town where Richard Dix happens in, spoils a bank raid by the James gang with his quick shooting, gets himself elected marshal, exposes the town's banker-boss as a crook and brings him and his outlaw band to justice. All this run-of-the-mill drama is highlighted with a cattle stampede, realistic street and saloon fights, and the blowing up of a bridge. The romantic department is taken care of quite acceptably by Jane Wyatt, with Victor Jory as the hero's rival. This is no super horse opera, but until a better one comes along it will thrill young and old Western addicts. (United Artists)

**FIRST COMES COURAGE.** Here is a record of the underground in Norway that fails either to convince or entertain. It is the wearisome story of a wealthy girl who pretends sympathy with the Nazis and love for one of their officers in her quest for information to pass on to the Allies. Merle Oberon as the spy is as unimpressive as the unfortunate role chosen for her, while Brian Aherne is completely lost in the part of a British commando who comes to prepare the way for a raid. Besides being tedious and ineffective, objection must be made to the feature since the heroine contracts marriage for a purpose that is not consonant with its nature. (Columbia)

MARY SHERIDAN



# CORRESPONDENCE

## SOLDIERS AS MARTYRS

EDITOR: Father Bluett's reply (AMERICA, August 7) to my letter on the subject of soldiers as martyrs (June 26), commands my highest respect. I queried the existence of a "solid consensus among approved authors" for his opinion; and he corroborates the fact, which indeed he had already recognized, that it does not exist. This strikes me as rather important where there is question not of a speculative opinion merely, but of a practical application of far-reaching consequence.

A great ecclesiastic, whose voice on such a subject is for many reasons of special interest, may be quoted, to illustrate the opposition of opinions. Cardinal Mercier has this to say:

... a staff officer asked me whether a soldier who falls in battle in the service of a just cause ... can be called a martyr. If one uses the term in its strict theological sense, the answer is negative. The soldier is not a martyr because he dies with a weapon in his hands, whereas the martyr delivers himself helpless unto the violence of his persecutors. (From a selection by Cardinal Mercier in George Shuster's *World's Great Catholic Literature*, as reported to me by private letter.)

May I repeat that the practice of the Church is an excellent norm. The assumption that soldiers who die a Christian death on the battlefield, in a good cause, a cause constructively Christian, are in the strict and proper sense martyrs of the Faith seems to me somewhat at variance with the implications of the ordinary practice of the Church.

Ann Arbor, Mich.

EDGAR R. SMOTHERS, S.J.

## CATHOLIC AID TO ITALIAN ORPHANS

EDITOR: Press dispatches are full of the enthusiastic welcome given to our troops by the people of Sicily. As more and more Italian territory is opened up to our occupation, the thought occurs that an opportunity is thereby presented to Catholics in this country to do something on behalf of the countless war orphans of Sicily and Italy. Surely their needs appeal to us, and their relief need not be left entirely to the official agencies. Is any attempt being made to come to their rescue?

Hollywood, Md.

E. M.

## MORE THAN "MOST DISAGREEABLE"?

EDITOR: I was surprised that a Catholic magazine of your standing, for the sake of expediency, would minimize the serious warning of the Holy Father concerning Communism. It seems that Communism now is rather a trifle, not the paramount danger to the very Christian life, as exemplified in the Encyclical, *Atheistic Communism*. In your "Comment of the Week," June 26, I found this astonishing gradation on the three evils that confront the world today. I quote your own words: "Nazis are horrid, Fascists revolting, the Communists" ... only "most disagreeable." No comment.

Cleveland, Miss.

REV. E. VICTOR ROTONDO

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Our exact words were: "Nasty people and ideologies ought not to make us throw up our hands cynically over the depravity of the human race. The Nazis are horrid, the Fascists revolting, the Communists

most disagreeable; but human nature has, thank God, still some lovable qualities." The Comment made no attempt to grade the "nasty people and ideologies," but only to contrast them all with mankind's "lovable qualities."]

## LIKES WOMAN'S ISSUE

EDITOR: Your July 31 number was indeed a most pleasant surprise. It is typical of the liberal policy of your magazine to present to us an "all-woman" number. The women in this war do deserve much recognition and encouragement and I am sure those Catholic women who will read this issue will be truly pleased with this pat on the back.

It was Christianity which raised womanhood to an exalted position through its teaching of special reverence for Our Blessed Mother.

It is a great satisfaction to find that the present-day women are fulfilling their patriotic duty in such an exemplary manner. Thank you for bringing the situation so poignantly before the public.

Rockaway Park, N. Y.

ALICE LIVERMORE

## SAROYAN AND PERFECTIONISTS

EDITOR: One of the most irritating aspects of the Catholic perfectionist school (of which there are few pupils, but how annoying they are at times) is its attack on some non-Catholic writers as exponents of "humanitarianism" who, although not grounded in a completely sound philosophy as are our "perfectionists," still show in their writings the spirit of Christianity. I refer, specifically—and we have all seen many other examples of it throughout our lives—to the criticism of the writings of Saroyan which was recently published in AMERICA (July 31, 1943).

If the perfectionist in philosophy, or the pretender to such omniscience, insists on taking pokes at the non-Catholic writers who do not exactly fall in line with our Thomistic philosophy, let him point out *precisely* where in the non-Catholic writer is "humanitarian," for the benefit of us who like to read books fundamentally Christian, and therefore Catholic, in spirit, such as those of Saroyan! (And if there is any disagreement about Saroyan being fundamentally Christian, let the wise guy step forward and enlighten us dunderheads who have been taught by our Catholic religion to rejoice in the spirit of Christianity regardless of its source, even though that source—aside from Revelation—may be as imperfect as our own.)

I aim this same criticism against those Catholic writers who fail to see anything at all good in the opposition camp. Not only should we condemn non-Christian thinking, stating the correct principle, but we should also praise the spirit of Christianity, regardless of its source, if we have good reason to believe that a writer or speaker or worker in the universal vineyard is honestly sincere.

If the critic of non-Catholic literature will be more exactly critical, he will help, perhaps, both the non-Catholic writer and the Catholic reader, but such criticism must stem from a full and comprehensive grasp of Catholic philosophic teaching, or else it should not be made.

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## PARADE

(Bill, a taxicab driver, is sitting in his car, reading a newspaper. Man approaches, enters Bill's cab.)

**Bill:** Hello, Professor.

**Professor:** Take me to the General Courts Building (Bill heads cab down street).

**Bill:** I see your name in the paper here.

**Professor:** Oh, yes, that's about an article I wrote. What do you think of it?

**Bill:** I don't have time yet to read it. I just see the headlines.

**Professor:** Well, I proposed a new department in the Government, a Department of Population. This department would control the breeding of children. It would sterilize the unfit, and in general exercise pretty complete control over all parents.

**Bill:** Which means most everybody?

**Professor:** That's right. This proposed Population Department would prevent marriages that would produce inferior offspring.

**Bill:** That'd give the politicians a great chance. If the Democrats run this here department they might try to stop the breeding of Republicans.

**Professor:** Oh, it would all be done solely from the scientific viewpoint. The department would classify parents capable of breeding superior children, and give them permission to breed.

**Bill:** Sorta give 'em A cards for small families, C cards for big families. An' without these cards, nobody can't have kids of their own?

**Professor:** That's right. The department would have thousands of employes going around seeing that the feeble-minded, etc. were sterilized.

**Bill:** Suppose these here feeble-minded don't want to get sterilized?

**Professor:** It won't make any difference what they want.

**Bill:** That sounds something like Hitler to me.

**Professor:** No, no. This is science. The department would promote research into heredity to learn exactly what produces good and bad human individuals.

**Bill:** You mean you don't know all that now?

**Professor:** Well, er . . . no, not everything?

**Bill:** Well, if you don't know all about heredity how can you tell which parents is goin' to have superior kids?

**Professor:** We have a pretty good idea. The department will also supervise the medical, physiological, psychological and nutritional care of the population from birth to maturity.

**Bill:** I guess Lincoln never woulda got born under this here department. Ain't you forgettin' human beings ain't just animals? Human beings got something animals ain't got.

**Professor:** Here's the court building. Wait for me. (Professor hastens into building. Bill, later, strolls into edifice, stops in corridor before huge copy of the Declaration of Independence, begins reading it. A bit after, the Professor appears in corridor, sees Bill.)

**Professor:** It's going to take me longer than I thought. So, don't wait. (Bill returns to his cab, drives back to his corner stand. Louie comes over.)

**Bill** (after relating conversation): Here's what the Declaration of Independence says. It says the Creator endows man with unalienable rights and the State is just to protect these here rights. The Creator says: "Men and women can marry, if they want to." And this here professor says: "No, they can't. I'm going' to have the Government stop 'em." The Creator says: "You can't go around sterilizin' people." This here guy says: "Yes, we can." This here professor attacks Fascism in Europe and yet he wants to set it up here. There's something wrong with our schools, Louie.

**Louie:** I guess you got something there, Bill.

**Bill:** I know I got something.

JOHN A. TOOMEY



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